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New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

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03-39798 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Expression of welcome to Mr. Heraldo Muñoz, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Before turning to the item on our agenda, I would like to welcome to the Council Chamber His Excellency Mr. Heraldo Muñoz, the new Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, and, on behalf of all members of the Council, to wish him success in his position.

Expression of farewell to Mr. Wang Yingfan, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

The President (*spoke in Russian*): It is my understanding that our colleague the Permanent Representative of China, Ambassador Wang Yingfan, has received an important new appointment and is in this Chamber for the last time before leaving New York. We hope that there will be other times in the future, but today, on behalf of the members of the Council, I would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Wang for his important contribution to the work of the Council and for his diplomatic skill and collegiality, as well as his common-sense approach to Council issues. He has represented his country in a very worthy and effective way. I am certain that in the future he will use his great talent in his new post.

We will remember Ambassador Wang as a colleague who always tried to work in cooperation and harmony with other members of the Council. On everyone's behalf, I wish him success in his future work.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for your generous appraisal of my work in the Security Council. Indeed, today will be the last time that I will speak in this Chamber as the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all representatives, Permanent Missions and Secretariat colleagues for their support and cooperation during my years of service here.

While I am leaving, my colleagues will continue to work hard and to face new challenges and the higher expectations of Member States for the United Nations and the Security Council. It is a pleasure to know that many new colleagues have come to replace older members like myself, including the Permanent Representative of Chile, who has just assumed his post. Therefore, I trust that all members will achieve even greater success and I wish them good luck.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Colombia, Greece, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Giraldo (Colombia), Mr. Vassilakis (Greece), Mr. Gopinathan (India), Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Haraguchi (Japan), Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan), Mr. McIvor (New Zealand), Mr. Kolby (Norway), Mr. Manalo (Philippines), Mr. Chun (Republic of Korea), Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) and Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Director General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Costa to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and by Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

I call on Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): Members of the Council will recall the words of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, in his briefing to the Council on 6 May. He described the significant progress made in the Bonn process, but he also warned against the security environment in Afghanistan and of the threat posed by the prevailing security situation to the gains made.

The emphasis on drugs in Afghanistan which you, Sir, have designated for this meeting is indeed welcome, given the importance of the issue to the immediate and long-term stability of the country and the region. Mr. Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, will be focusing more specifically on that issue, and I will provide an update on the situation in Afghanistan since the last briefing.

Over the past month, some positive progress was made. Most notably, President Karzai took resolute action towards establishing and affirming the Government's authority in the provinces. We have also seen the commencement of public consultations on the Constitution, and planning for the electoral process is now in its final stages. But the security situation remains a serious impediment to progress and is a major risk to the entire process. Solutions exist for this problem, but resolving it will require the strong commitment of the Afghan authorities and the international community.

Before turning to the issue of security and its influence on the Bonn process as a whole, I wish first provide the Council with an overview of recent developments in a number of other areas.

First, regarding relations between the centre and the periphery, some 18 months since the Bonn Agreement and the establishment of the Interim Authority, the authority of the Transitional Administration beyond Kabul is still, unfortunately, too limited. The majority of provincial authorities continue to act with an autonomy that denies the Transitional Administration the means to implement its national development plan. Yet the population expects the Afghan Administration to improve the economic situation and the security environment, which would give the Afghan Administration its credibility. It is clear that the patience of the Afghan population is wearing thin.

In a determined effort to assert the authority of his Government, President Karzai summoned 12 of the country's most powerful governors and regional commanders to Kabul on 20 May, threatening to resign if he failed to secure their full cooperation. The persons brought together committed themselves to implementing a 13-point decision of the National Security Council, which seeks, among other things, to forbid the recruitment of private militias and military action unauthorized by the central Government, to reaffirm the ban on any individual holding both a military and civilian post and to dissolve some extragovernmental bodies; it also provides for administrative powers for its implementation.

The National Security Council decision also requires that all governors transfer provincial income to the central Government. The Minister of Finance has since secured the transfer of customs revenues from several provinces, including $20 million from Herat's Ismael Khan. The Minister of Finance also continues to visit other provinces to seek the transfer of funds and

put in place an automatic transfer mechanism. At issue is the gradual collection by the Government of $200 million that is anticipated for the budget. To date, $40 million has been collected. This infusion of new cash has enabled the Government to pay some of the overdue salaries of its civil servants and Afghan National Army troops. However, regular remittances will be the real test of the provinces' compliance with the Government's directive.

Unfortunately, there are already signs that written agreements do not necessarily translate into tangible action. For example, Ismael Khan has already signalled his unwillingness to yield any authority to Kabul and has refused, for the moment, to resign one of his posts. The Government and the international community must send a strong signal that the signatories will be held accountable for their pledges.

(*spoke in English*)

The overall human rights situation continues to be negatively affected by extortion by local commanders, arbitrary detentions and the general lack of the rule of law. This remains a source of instability and diminishes the credibility of the Government. As part of the response, the seven satellite offices of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission are now fully operational. Their staff, with the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), has undertaken joint monitoring and investigations of human rights violations as well as the organization of educational and other promotional activities. During the public consultations on the Constitution and initial preparations for next year's elections, and through its capacity to monitor human rights abuses, it is expected that the offices of the Commission will play an important role in the civic education process.

Of all the elements of the peace process, re-establishing the rule of law and, in particular, the justice sector, is one of the most important areas for long-term stability. Yet that area also requires the greatest investment of time in order to train lawyers, build the judiciary and public confidence in it, and bolster its position with respect to other State institutions. As part of its overall work plan, which includes determining which laws are currently in force and surveying and developing the human, technical, and logistical needs of the justice sector, the Judicial Reform Commission took several steps this past month. The Ministry of Justice has begun to compile and index national laws with participation of foreign experts. Law revision has been initiated in the fields of criminal law and criminal procedure, as well as on judicial organization, which are crucial areas for the establishment of the rule of law. The Commission also initiated discussions with the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission on areas of the Constitution relating to the judiciary. In Kabul, reconstruction of the High Court and the Property Deeds Office is already under way with United States support.

I would now like to turn to the Constitutional Review Commission, which formally started public consultations on 6 June. Teams of three Commissioners will lead the consultations with elders, local shuras and ordinary citizens in all 32 provinces of Afghanistan, as well as with the refugee community in Iran and Pakistan. The first five teams were sent to Mazar, Gardez, Jalalabad, Kunduz and Bamyan on 10 June. The Commission has decided not to circulate the current draft of the Constitution, which was prepared by the first Drafting Committee and which is incomplete.

It reasoned that it would first wish to learn about the population's expectations of its provisions and that consideration of the current draft as it now stands could limit the dialogue. A draft Constitution, which takes into account the results of the public consultation and the views of the full Commission, will be circulated in September. Meanwhile, a working group appointed by the President has been discussing options for the organization of the Constitutional Loya Jirga. Recommendations will be finalized and forwarded to the President later this month. Logistical and security arrangements are being discussed among Government representatives, UNAMA, international representatives and the international security forces. Their complexity should not be underestimated.

UNAMA's preparations for the electoral registration process have continued, and last month the capacity to pursue that process was significantly enhanced beyond the four-person team with the approval of the supplementary budget that established the Electoral Unit. Six Regional Coordination Officers have now been recruited and are being deployed into the regions, where they will undertake an on-the-ground needs assessment of the situation as it now exists and determine the practicality of the current

work plan. Due to the lack of an Afghan counterpart and the timing of the election, UNAMA has had to plan on the assumption that most of the electoral registration would have to be done directly by United Nations staff, international and local. However, we were recently informed that the Government is now considering more actively the option of establishing an elections commission, which would allow for greater Afghan involvement in electoral management, given time for capacity-building. The finalized draft budget is to be presented to donors shortly, and it is hoped that the necessary voluntary funding will be forthcoming.

The election process is fundamentally a shared responsibility between the Government, the United Nations and the international community. The feasibility of conducting the registration and its ultimate credibility will depend not only upon the various technical contributions to the management of the registration process from the United Nations and the Government, but also, critically, it will depend upon the effective creation of an improved political environment, and most important, on security.

On 7 June, the international community was brutally reminded of how fragile peace remains, even in Kabul, when a suicide car bomber detonated a large explosive alongside a German International Security Assistance Force bus, killing four personnel and one bystander and injuring 29 personnel in the most deadly attack on the international security force in its 18 months of operations. This dreadful act was designed to shake the resolve of the international community in its commitment to the peace process. But it did not. Germany and the rest of the international community have reaffirmed their commitment to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, this incident underscores that Kabul is not immune to the security problems of the hinterland, and that if security is not extended from Kabul, then the city itself will become more vulnerable and thus less stable.

Other signs of the activity of those seeking to subvert the process continue to occur in the rest of the country. Across the north, factional fighting regularly continues. The outbreak of fighting on 16 May between two police commanders belonging to rival factions in Mazar-e-Sharif led to the suspension of United Nations activities in the city for four days. Among those killed was the local United Nations security focal point.

In southern and south-eastern Afghanistan, incidents of violent crime and reported clashes between suspected Taliban and Coalition and Afghan National Army forces continue amid an apparent marked increase in Taliban infiltration. In the second week of June, police officers were twice ambushed while travelling on roads in the province of Zabul, resulting in the death of two police officers.

International and national non-governmental organizations operating in several cities, including Kandahar and Jalalabad, have been the target of grenade attacks. In response to a series of attacks and threats to demining teams, the United Nations Mine Action Centre was forced to suspend all activities in 10 provinces and along the Kabul-Kandahar road.

In the current security environment, United Nations road missions have had to be severely restricted in the provinces of Zabul, Uruzgan, Kandahar and northern Helmand. Where not suspended, missions must be accompanied along main roads by armed escorts provided by the Afghan authorities. In effect, one third of the country is currently inaccessible to the United Nations, which seriously hinders the ability of the Organization and others to carry out reconstruction efforts and to lay the groundwork for the Constitutional Loya Jirga, for the elections and for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in the affected regions.

Ultimately, national security structures will have to assume responsibility for domestic security, backed by a functioning justice system. But it will take time for those institutions to develop the necessary capacity and to become truly national in character. Satisfactory progress has been made in the training of the national army and police forces by the lead nations — the United States and Germany, respectively. Some of those forces have already been successfully deployed. But the funding for the forces' salaries is woefully inadequate. The success of these structures in providing security also depends on the establishment of an effective justice system — to which I referred earlier — and on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts.

With the support of the Government of Japan and of UNAMA, the DDR programme will be ready to commence later this week. Within the Government, the Ministry of Defence is to have the lead role in the implementation of the DDR programme, but the

Ministry is conspicuously lacking in regional and ethnic balance and thus does not have the trust of the factions that are to participate in the programme. Until the Ministry of Defence reforms itself — including at its uppermost echelons — it will not enjoy the necessary trust of the factions. Accordingly, the commencement of DDR has now been made contingent on the implementation of a series of confidence-building measures signalling that reform of the Ministry of Defence is indeed irreversible and in conformity with the presidential decree of 1 December 2002.

We welcome the contribution of the provincial reconstruction teams to improved security, and we are encouraged by the recent expression of interest by a number of countries in participating in the teams, of which there are currently three, composed of 185 personnel. They can provide a platform for supporting and expanding the work that is being undertaken on security sector reform. They can assist in the provincial training of police and can help provide an environment conducive to judicial reform as well as other measures aimed at improving local governance. They can also carry out infrastructure work to support Government authority, such as renovating police stations, rebuilding courthouses and constructing barracks for the new Afghan National Army.

The early deployment of elements of the Afghan National Army to Gardez and Bamyan has also highlighted the role that the provincial reconstruction teams can play in familiarizing such forces with the concept of civic action and, through such engagement, contributing to the establishment of greater security. Finally, the teams can play a confidence-building role in connection with a number of processes that have started or are about to start, namely, the constitution-making process, DDR and electoral preparations. However, in the current environment, we must be aware that the teams, at their current strength and level of deployment, are still far from an adequate response to the security challenge posed to the Bonn process.

Therefore, we must continue to stress that, while national Afghan institutions are ultimately the answer, further deployment of international security elements that are of a reasonable size and are able to project credible strength is needed to provide the security environment and confidence necessary for the Bonn process to move forward to its natural conclusion.

Finally, we can say that, in the past month, civic processes central to the Bonn Agreement have commenced — and others will soon begin — that offer all Afghans a stake in achieving a stable State. The technical and logistical dimensions of moving ahead with the peace process are being put in place, but the necessary environment is not there. There are still some within Afghanistan for whom the process represents a threat, and it is their intent to subvert it and to force the Government and the international community into retreat. They are relatively few in number, but the vicious technology of terror gives them power that is disproportionate to their number. The aims of the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Hekmatyar are reasonably clear. More difficult to gauge is whether the professed commitment of regional commanders and powerful governors to the nation-building process is genuine, or whether in fact they are prepared to undermine it.

Much has been invested in the progress made to date in Afghanistan. The process has now entered its most critical and most sensitive stage — the constitutional and electoral processes — but prevailing insecurity poses a serious risk of derailing it. Those who wish to subvert the process should not be allowed to triumph over the aspiration of the vast majority of Afghans to a stable State. I encourage the Afghan authorities and the international community to demonstrate a shared commitment to providing the conditions necessary for the peace process to move forward.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Costa.

Mr. Costa: It is an honour to address the Council, and I thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to do so.

At the outset, I should like to stress three points regarding the drug situation in Afghanistan. First, during the past quarter century, Afghanistan has found itself at the crossroads of violence and, as a consequence, of illegal activity. War and lawlessness have been the forces that have driven opium production to its present levels, not the other way around; let us be sure we get the logic right. Secondly, the establishment of the effective rule of law is essential. The Government's commitment to controlling the cultivation, trade and abuse of narcotics can be

honoured only if stability and security spread throughout the country — a point just raised, in a sense, by my colleague Mr. Guéhenno. Thirdly, it is not true that the whole country is involved in illegal activity. Less than 1 per cent of its land is devoted to opium poppy cultivation, and no more than 6 per cent of its families derive the resulting illicit income from that activity. Only five of the country's 31 provinces produce opium on a large scale.

The Afghan Transitional Administration is gradually rebuilding the country's Government, and national policies are being developed, difficult and long as the process is. In the process, generous support from the international community — particularly from the nations that have taken the lead in various sectors of the Administration — remains indispensable. Allow me to thank in particular the Government of the United Kingdom for its generous and continuing role in leading the anti-narcotics work.

While the opium economy undermines current institution-building efforts in Afghanistan, the argument could actually be turned around: the slow progress in re-establishing the rule of law is hurting the ability of the authorities to reduce the drug economy. It is a vicious circle that we need to break, and I will return to this issue.

What are the facts of the current situation? In 2002, the Office of Drugs and Crime in Vienna — my Office — estimated poppy cultivation in Afghanistan at 74,000 hectares, resulting in 3,400 tons of output from five provinces in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the country. All tribes and ethnic groups were involved. What about this year, 2003? According to our preliminary survey — we shall release the final survey in September — current opium cultivation appears to have spread to new areas, while a perceptible decrease has taken place in the traditional provinces of Helmand, Kandahar, Nangahar and Oruzgan. On balance, neither the total surface under cultivation nor the volume of output is likely to change significantly in 2003 with respect to last year.

What is the significance of all this? We need to recognize that, despite current efforts, in the coming years Afghanistan will continue to be the world's largest opium producer. Why such a long time frame? Because, over the past 20 years, Afghan agriculture — actually the entire infrastructure in the countryside — has been destroyed, resulting in a war economy in which arms, drugs, smuggling and opium have provided the means of livelihood, savings, credit and the means of exchange for almost one fifth of the economy. About 20 per cent of the gross domestic product of Afghanistan is involved in this illegal activity.

To rid Afghanistan of its dependence on illegal activities, it is necessary to create ample and easily accessible opportunities for alternative, licit sources of income. This task, however, is rendered complicated by the interrelated economic and political factors, including security factors, that I addressed just now. Let me look at them from my own angle.

First, with respect to the economic factors, on the surface of it the country seems to defy a basic law of economics, according to which price and risk trends are correlated. In the modern market, as in every economic aspect, prices increase if risks increase. This is not the case in Afghanistan today. Opium prices, which were at about $35 to $50 per kilo a few years ago, have recently shot up to about $550 to $600 per kilo. While the revenue generated to farmers by the opium harvest in the 1990s was $150 million a year, last year it was $1.2 billion — almost 10 times greater. An amount of this order of magnitude is equal to the resources made available by the international community to Afghanistan last year. Illegally, the same amount of income is being generated domestically.

In order to understand how important it is to redress the risk/reward balance in the Afghan countryside, let me make another point regarding the security and political factors I have already addressed. The task of ridding Afghanistan of the drug economy requires much greater political, security and financial capital than is presently available to assist the rural areas affected by opium production and, above all, to improve the central Government's ability to implement its opium production ban.

Drugs originating in Afghanistan provide resources to crime and terrorism. They are a threat to stability. They pose a major health threat. They corrupt. Let me address these points one at the time.

The drug dealers, among them the remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, have a vested interest in ensuring that the Afghan State remains weak in Afghanistan. In pursuing their goals, they foment regional strife and nourish separatist ambitions and armed conflicts to destabilize the Government.

Secondly, corruption is both a cause and a consequence of narcotrafficking in Afghanistan, much as it is everywhere else. My Office has studied extensively the drug-trafficking routes. A common element among them is the presence of corrupt Government officials, corrupt port and airport staff and corrupt customs employees. The old Silk Road has now been turned into an opium-paved road and is riddled with such evidence of corruption.

Perhaps the most serious threat, however, has come from the spreading of HIV/AIDS because of drug injection. In some of the countries neighbouring Afghanistan, four out of five — over 80 per cent of — new cases of HIV infection have been caused this way. Unless the problem is brought under control, the risk of a pandemic in the region cannot be excluded — a point that President Putin himself raised in his recent address to his nation.

Finally, the massive drug traffic from Afghanistan endangers economic and social stability in the countries located along the trafficking routes, thereby fuelling crime, money-laundering and terrorist activities beyond the Afghan border.

Therefore, in closing, I would like to stress the importance of a partnership in addressing the Afghan drug question. The Transitional Islamic Government of Afghanistan last month adopted a first national drug control strategy. It foresees the elimination of opium within 10 years through law enforcement and rural development. It also aims to counter domestic processing and trafficking, fight money-laundering, reduce abuse and enhance international cooperation in drug control.

Indeed, we believe that the Afghan drug economy can be reconverted to peace and growth if the Government is assisted in addressing the roots of the matter. A report recently prepared by my Office — copies of which are available to the members of the Council — has exposed the roots of the problem. First, the report has deconstructed Afghanistan's drug economy into its main components: production, trafficking, financing, refining and abuse. Secondly, the report has reconstructed the country's development processes piece by piece to show that it is essential to help farmers decide in favour of licit crops; to replace local narco-usurers with microcredit programmes; to provide jobs and education to women and children, who are most heavily involved in the cultivation of a labour-intensive product like opium poppies; to turn bazaars into modern trading places; and to neutralize warlords and their efforts to keep the drug trade alive.

As I said earlier, however, national efforts are not enough. Hence the convergent efforts of neighbouring countries through which narcotics are exported and of Europe and Russia, where heroin abuse helps nourish opium cultivation in Afghanistan, are needed.

In particular, the international community needs to develop a comprehensive approach. Here are a few elements of such an approach. First, we need to assist Afghanistan to implement its drug control strategy. We then have to promote in Afghanistan and its neighbours concerted measures against drug trafficking, stockpiling, clandestine laboratories and supply of precursors. We need to mainstream drug issues into the overall reconstruction programmes for Afghanistan, inviting the international financial institutions, the multilateral development banks, the United Nations agencies and bilateral donors to channel resources accordingly. Finally, we need to provide a follow-up to the recent Paris Conference on Drug Routes from Afghanistan with the proposed consultative groups.

A final point is addressed mainly to Europe and Russia, which represent the main lucrative markets for Afghan heroin. It is important that the main reduction efforts be intensified. This was a view expressed by ministers when they met in April at the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna. This is a view I support and which I believe would have a significant impact on the Afghan drug threat.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Costa for his briefing.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Costa for their mutually complementary briefings.

The representative of Greece will shortly make a statement on behalf of the European Union with which France fully associates itself. I will make just a few remarks on the problem of the anti-drug campaign.

I wish first to welcome Russia's initiative. The United Nations has a central role to play in the fight against the scourge of drugs. It must establish the guiding principles of international cooperation in this area as in many others. The General Assembly, at its twentieth special session in 1998, adopted seminal texts in this regard.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is unquestionably the best instrument for the implementation of anti-drug policies. Its technical assistance and support programmes are irreplaceable, and its leading role deserves to be further strengthened. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) must also make a useful contribution.

The Security Council must do its share in this effort. Trafficking from Afghanistan constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. Today drugs are among the ranks of other major threats, such as terrorism, arms proliferation and organized crime.

This threat affects everyone — Europe included, of course. An important share of Afghan opium is consumed in Europe. The transit countries are also harshly affected, and in growing numbers. The traditional route across the Balkans unfortunately has now been joined by a whole series of routes across Central Asia. The distinction between transit countries and consumer countries is no longer relevant. The countries of transit are now also consumer markets and have experienced the brunt of the effects of this situation: the destabilization of already fragile economies, a breakdown in State structures because of corruption, an explosion in criminality and a deterioration in public health.

For Afghanistan, of course, the production of and trafficking in drugs represents an enormous challenge. The continuation of poppy cultivation blocks reforms that are vital to the modernization of the country. Struggling against poppy cultivation in Afghanistan means making progress in two major areas of the Bonn process — that of security in the provinces and that of strengthening central authority vis-à-vis local strongholds. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), under the remarkable leadership of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, is providing irreplaceable support to the Afghan authorities on both these fronts.

But the battle is not won. After a considerable decline in 2000-2001, opium production in Afghanistan was estimated by the United Nations to be at 3,400 tonnes in 2002. The 2003 harvest will most likely be of the same magnitude. It suffices to look at the brochure distributed today to see the extent of the gravity of this problem.

Recently, President Karzai took courageous measures to confront this challenge. A plan of action was adopted by the Transitional Government. It is very significant that this plan proposes a long-term strategy for the complete elimination of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan by the year 2013. We must support these measures, together with the lead nations: the United Kingdom, in charge of the fight against drugs; Germany, for the police; and Italy, for judicial reform. This presupposes supporting the sustainable development of replacement crops. Afghanistan is by no means doomed to remain the world's biggest opium producer. Poppy cultivation is not a traditional activity in Afghanistan.

It is important that the international community's response to the drug scourge respect certain principles. All instruments must be used: repression, prevention and treatment. The objectives must be well balanced: the reduction of supply and demand. Coordination needs to be improved, regionally and internationally.

In order to implement this strategy and to tackle the problem in all its aspects, international mobilization is indispensable. Upon France's initiative, the representatives of 55 countries gravely affected by the trafficking of opium and heroin produced in Afghanistan met in Paris on 22 May of this year. Over 30 Ministers were present. A declaration, the Paris Covenant, was adopted at the conclusion of the meeting; it has been submitted for circulation as an official Security Council document. By this Covenant, the Ministers agreed to combine their countries' efforts to strengthen national capacities, to develop regional partnerships and to establish a multilateral strategic framework under United Nations auspices. Precise follow-up measures have been planned; for example, the establishment of a regional structure in charge of centralizing information, developing shared analyses and, as needed, conducting joint action.

This international mobilization must be ongoing. It is indispensable that the United Nations, the Security Council and the General Assembly participate fully in the implementation of this strategy. This is why France completely supports the Presidential statement that will be adopted at the conclusion of this meeting.

Mr. Pujalte (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and to Executive Director Costa for the information they have given us, and I also thank your country, Sir, for having taken the initiative of convening this meeting on

Afghanistan, especially from the standpoint of drug production and trafficking.

Mexico wants to express its appreciation to all donor countries and troop-contributing countries, to governmental and non-governmental organizations that are making possible this great humanitarian endeavour that the international community has undertaken in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

We wish to highlight the coordination work being accomplished by UNAMA and the concerted work of all the competent bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, the multilateral financial institutions, humanitarian assistance organizations and civil society.

In Afghanistan, as in other contemporary conflicts, the international community must strengthen international cooperation in order to tackle the causes of these conflicts and to act in a timely way to reconstruct national institutions and to bring about economic rehabilitation. Nonetheless, in spite of the progress made by the Interim Authority since the Bonn Agreements, Mexico is concerned that problems remain that are real threats to security and to the democratic process that is beginning to be established.

There are still major unresolved challenges in Afghanistan, including the formation of an army and a national police force, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, fighting drug production, promoting a culture of respect for human rights, the drafting and adoption of a new constitution and the holding of general elections. In all of these tasks, international cooperation will be fundamental in order to meet these challenges appropriately.

The challenges must be tackled at the same time as that of creating conditions for the holding of general elections, scheduled for the year 2004. In Mexico's opinion, this process should be supported vigorously by UNAMA and by the international community, so that it can be transparent and legitimate, by establishing a reliable model and through the establishment of an autonomous authority for the holding of the elections and appropriate international monitoring to ensure their legitimacy.

Towards this end, we emphasize the need to strengthen security in Afghanistan, through projects of infrastructure, education and health, with a view to accomplishing the immediate tasks of humanitarian assistance and implementing long-term plans for development assistance. We forcefully condemn the attack on the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) on 7 June, and we also condemn the attacks that have occurred in recent months against humanitarian personnel.

As was made clear by the briefings that we have heard, the situation in Afghanistan is quite complex. Alongside the political forces promoting inter-ethnic reconciliation, democracy and respect for human rights, there continue to exist forces that foment anarchy and extremism. That is why, in the opinion of my country, it is necessary, as a first step, to expand the ranks of ISAF to improve security throughout the country. That, in turn, will make it possible to create solid national institutions.

The problem of drug production extends beyond the area of public health. As in the case of drug trafficking, this problem consists of a chain, the financing of which corrupts society and promotes violence and the illicit traffic in weapons. The problem of drug trafficking has two main aspects: production and consumption. The countries where consumption has spread also have a responsibility to prevent the chain of crime generated by the sale of heroin in the big cities from condemning the rural population of Afghanistan and other countries to being the victims of the traffickers who encourage those illicit crops.

Our countries have formed a common front in the appropriate forums to combat this global phenomenon. In that context, the Council must take into account the basic principles agreed on by the international community for cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking: a balance of focus on supply and demand, a comprehensive treatment of the problem — our common, shared responsibility — and respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and of international law.

In particular, we must be mindful of the international agreements that have been adopted, such as the ministerial declaration of the forty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of last April, in which the commitments in the global fight against drugs were renewed, based on the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly of 1998, held at the request by my country.

During the negotiations on that ministerial declaration, there was an attempt to strengthen the principles of shared responsibility, international

cooperation and the use of an overall focus in order to treat supply and demand with equal emphasis. In that context, the Council should recognize the work accomplished by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and by the General Assembly in international cooperation against drugs and should support the commitments made in the ministerial declaration.

Mexico thanks France for its initiative in convening the conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe, held in Paris in May. Mexico expresses its support for the content of the Paris Declaration. Similarly, Mexico thanks the United Kingdom and Germany for their efforts to support the fight against drugs in Afghanistan.

Mexico wants to see an Afghanistan that is democratic, respectful of human rights and, especially, an Afghanistan with an economic future free from drug trafficking. A strategic coalition has been created in Afghanistan among donor countries, the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and non-governmental organizations in order to assist the Afghan people in their search for lasting peace.

The international community must continue its effort to strengthen the peace process and to lay the bases for the sustainable economic development of a democratic Afghanistan.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): First, I wish to thank you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation for organizing this public meeting on Afghanistan. I would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, for their important briefings.

The holding of the present meeting, essentially devoted to the problem of combating poppy cultivation, is ample evidence of the Council's determination to make a greater contribution to the re-establishment of security, which is necessary for peace and stability in Afghanistan. While, at the political level, notable progress has been made in the framework of the implementation of the Bonn Agreement, insecurity remains the main obstacle to the creation of a State of rule of law. It must be recognized that Afghanistan now finds itself at a crossroads. The constitutional process initiated a few months ago is supposed to lead to transparent and credible elections and to the establishment of a multi-ethnic and broadly representative Government. It should also lead to the establishment of viable institutions charged with ensuring the primacy of law, respect for fundamental freedoms and the promotion of gender equality.

My delegation notes that illicit drugs are one of the major sources of financing for criminal activities and international terrorism. It has also been established that drug abuse, the result of a deeper malaise, has become a genuine social problem.

In Afghanistan, illicit poppy cultivation and the production and trafficking of drugs are, more than ever, a major concern. To deal with this issue, the Afghan Transitional Administration, led by President Hamid Karzai, has set the objective, among others, of eradicating poppy cultivation. In that context, the Government has taken the appropriate regulatory measures to give that effort the necessary efficacy.

We believe that this is a long-term fight requiring binding provisions, public awareness and information campaigns and alternative options. In other words, the Afghan authorities must rigorously implement the measures taken and must educate the population about the dangers of opium. The international community must assist the carrying-out of quick-impact development projects, particularly those for finding alternative crops able to generate substantial revenues for farmers.

My delegation remains convinced that the simultaneous implementation of the provisions made will contribute decisively to the eradication of this scourge, whose negative impact on the security of Afghanistan is clear.

In order for security — that key sector — to become a tangible reality in the country, it is up to all of us, in cooperation with the Afghan authorities, to strengthen the foundations of the political process resulting from the Bonn Agreement by providing greater support for the reforms undertaken.

In fact, the Bonn Agreement has entered the crucial phase of consolidating the peace process and the recovery of the country, which greatly needs the political support and financial assistance of the international community, combined with greater efforts from Afghans themselves.

Finally, my delegation welcomes the celebration on 26 June of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, under the slogan "Let's

talk about drugs". We hope that this day of public awareness will provide an opportunity for the peoples of the world to become more aware of the need to get rid of this international scourge.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, permit me to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Antonio Costa for their very detailed introductory briefings. I would like to say how pleased I am to see them here with us today.

There is no doubt that the subject of this meeting is an extremely important and complex component of the situation in Afghanistan. It requires that the United Nations and the international community in general continue to play a role in helping the Afghan people strengthen their security and rebuild their country.

As Mr. Guéhenno told us today, the problem of security is one of the major challenges in the peace process in Afghanistan because of the intense activities of some elements in Afghanistan. However, it must be said that drug production and drug trafficking beyond the country's borders are important aspects of the challenge, which must be met and overcome. Poppy cultivation, which allows for the production of drugs and their subsequent sale, is a source of national, regional and global concern because the profits from drugs make it possible to finance terrorism.

It is regrettable that, as we were told today, poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is a major source of profit. In 2002, 3,400 tons were produced. In other words, production has returned to pre-2002 levels, making Afghanistan in 2003 the world's largest opium producer, despite the efforts being made to overcome this scourge. Therefore, it is a main concern of the international community. It is a potential danger to the international community as a whole. Fighting it requires a complete and consistent strategy to be carried out under United Nations auspices and in coordination with the parties concerned, including regional parties and the Afghan Transitional Administration.

We welcome the efforts being made by the Transitional Administration of Afghanistan and the measures being adopted for the cultivation of alternative crops, thus making it possible to fight drug traffic. We must not forget the valuable support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

State structures in Afghanistan must be strengthened so that they can combat the drug problem and so that national legislation in that regard can be improved and respect for the rule of law ensured. That requires increased international assistance. Afghanistan needs the assistance of the international community, going beyond simple financial aid. Donors must fulfil their obligations towards the country. For its part, the Transitional Administration must redouble its efforts to generate additional sources of revenue to ensure a better life for farmers, making it possible for them to develop alternative crops. This must be done with a view to establishing a solid economy in Afghanistan and must be accompanied by a campaign to increase the Afghan people's awareness of the dangers of poppy cultivation, and by a sense of responsibility on the part of the international community.

I would like to emphasize that the struggle against this scourge in Afghanistan must not stop at the borders of Afghanistan, because it is the responsibility of the international community as a whole. As I have said, a coherent, comprehensive, well-coordinated strategy is needed to deal with this problem seriously. That can be achieved by strengthening safety and security, State structures and the army, so that the Afghan people can be well governed. Towards that end, help is needed in the adoption of a constitution and in holding fair elections that truly express the will of the Afghan people. It is not possible to deal with the problem of drug production in an isolated manner, without strengthening State structures, improving the security situation and strengthening the army.

Mr. Tidjani (*spoke in French*): Cameroon would like to commend you, Sir, and to thank you for having organized this meeting on the production and traffic of drugs in Afghanistan. This is an important subject, whose manifestations and consequences transcend the specific situation of this country, which has been battered by more than two decades of war.

Today Afghanistan produces more than 3,500 tons of opium annually. It is an enormous amount, particularly when we know that only two years ago, poppy cultivation in that country had fallen to a few hundred tons. The connections among poppy production, the lack of security, economic difficulties, corruption and building a State based on the rule of law is clearly established. Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Antonio María Costa gave excellent statements on this a while ago. Cameroon

would like to express to them our great appreciation for the excellent quality of their introductory remarks this morning.

The interconnections among cultivation, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime, of which the traffic in small arms is an illustrative outgrowth, has been mentioned in a number of meetings organized over the past few weeks on this matter in Tashkent, Prague and Paris.

Cameroon would like to especially thank the Government of France for having organized on 21 and 22 May 2003 a ministerial conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe. The conclusions of that meeting largely transcend the geopolitical framework that was its foundation. The concerns raised by the participants in the Paris meeting are basically identical to those heard in the areas of cultivation or transit of drugs in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia. Moreover, Ambassador de La Sablière spoke in detail about this in the statement he made earlier today.

Drug production and trafficking are among the most significant challenges facing post-Taliban Afghanistan, in addition to its reconstruction, security and the strengthening of the rule of law. As we have emphasized on several occasions, economic recovery, and particularly poverty eradication, security and the political process, are influenced directly or indirectly by the crucial question of poppy cultivation.

Warlords now seem to be at the heart of the economic and political dynamics of Afghanistan. These very warlords, with their ties to international crime, control the production and trafficking of opium coming from that country.

The efforts of certain countries to control this activity are praiseworthy, and Cameroon would like to express its appreciation to the United Kingdom and Germany for their interest in and determined efforts at combating this scourge, which contributes to instability in Afghanistan in social, economic and security terms, and which has a destructive impact that extends beyond the borders of Afghanistan. It must be acknowledged, unfortunately, that those efforts have had mixed success. Since the collapse of the Taliban, poppy production has rather increased in Afghanistan. Consumption has increased in transit and neighbouring countries.

This is cause for concern, and without the unprecedented mobilization of the international community, the advances made by the Afghan people are threatened. Such a mobilization surely suggests robust action in production zones. That action should involve diversifying production, especially agricultural production, and improvements in crop yield, particularly by means of substantial investment in irrigation works.

Mr. Costa has provided relevant information on the strategy to be implemented if we want to dissuade farmers from poppy production and to reorient them towards other profitable crops.

Aside from agriculture, Cameroon is convinced that the promotion of a competitive private sector and significant investment in productive sectors will help meet the challenge of unemployment and rampant crime. For Afghanistan to meet these challenges it will need the support of the international community, which should also promote access of its products to the major markets, in particular in Western Europe.

An efficient campaign to combat opium trafficking also entails removing the remaining ambiguity towards the warlords, who not only control the drug trade but are also increasingly present in all sectors of economic activity and in building the political process, directly or through their allies.

Strengthening institutional capacities and the central Government's control over all of Afghan territory, with a competent and honest army and police force, are equally indispensable to stemming drug trafficking.

On the international level, bolstering cooperation among countries of production, transit and consumption, strengthening instruments and certain structures, in particular the Office on Drugs and Crime, and the swift conclusion of negotiations on a comprehensive convention on transnational crime are also likely to promote the resolution of the thorny problem of the production and trade of Afghan opium.

Finally, Cameroon would like to support the presidential draft statement.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to associate myself, Mr. President, with the remarks that you made to Ambassador Wang and to tell him how much I have benefited from his wisdom and the clarity of his analyses, in particular, as well as his

human warmth over the past months in the Council. I personally thank him wholeheartedly and on behalf of my delegation. At the same time, I would like to welcome Ambassador Muños of Chile and wish him all the best at the Security Council.

I would like to thank Jean-Marie Guéhenno for his briefing and Mr. Costa for his complementary statement. Bulgaria fully associates itself with the declaration that will be made later on by the permanent representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union. But I would like to make a few comments in my national capacity.

It is very difficult for me not to react to the rather gloomy picture that Jean-Marie Guéhenno has just drawn concerning the security situation and other matters in the Afghan provinces. I will not elaborate on that in detail. I would just like to mention the fact that only one fifth of the expected budget revenues have been collected thus far in the Afghan provinces. One third of Afghan territory is inaccessible to the United Nations. These details and the human rights violations that continue in Afghanistan should, in my view, cause us to reflect on the situation.

Drug production is one of the most important dimensions of the Afghan situation for the international community, given that such production has implications first for the country itself, for the region and indeed for the entire world, especially for Europe. I thank you, Sir, for having focused our discussion this time on this subject. As you know, Bulgaria is geographically on the so-called Balkan route, the drug route that originates in Central Asia. The problem of drug production in Afghanistan has always been of central concern to us.

Bulgaria is following with growing concern the trend towards stabilization of a rather high-level of drug production that we are witnessing in Afghanistan, and which Mr. Costa has just confirmed. In 2002, the area of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is estimated to cover 74,000 hectares, and 3.3 million Afghans are involved in poppy cultivation, which makes up more than 20 per cent of Afghanistan's gross domestic product. Between 70 and 90 per cent of heroine in Europe comes from Afghanistan.

It must be noted — and here, I associate myself with what Mr. Costa just told us — that, in the light of that situation, we cannot expect that the problem of poppy production in Afghanistan will be resolved in the near future. However, we must not succumb to fatalism, because poppy cultivation is not traditional in Afghanistan, but, in terms of history, a relatively recent phenomenon. But it currently seems to have structural importance for the Afghan economy, and that, therefore, is the main source of our concern.

The efforts that the Afghan Transitional Administration is undertaking in its drug strategy represent an important element that we fully support. I shall not elaborate on the economic dimensions of the problem. It is clear that, unless alternative sources of income are created in the Afghan fields, it will be very difficult to talk about any solution to the poppy problem.

I take this opportunity to thank all the countries that are doing important leadership work in this area: the United Kingdom, as far as the drug problem itself is concerned; Germany, with regard to modernizing the Afghan police force; and Italy, as regards modernizing the justice system and establishing the rule of law.

It is clear that one of the surest ways to deal with the problem of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan is — as Mr. Costa said — to reduce demand in the consumer countries and the transit countries; there is now practically no difference between them. From that perspective, I must say that, according to the competent Bulgarian authorities, a positive trend regarding the Balkan drug route has been observed recently. The quantities of drugs on that route are gradually diminishing; alternative routes are being been taken. In that regard, the Paris ministerial conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe was a very important and very useful event.

One of the explanations for this trend is perhaps the fact that the countries of South-East Europe are undertaking major efforts to coordinate their work in this area, particularly within the framework of the Regional Centre for Combating Trans-Border Crime, which is part of the South-East European Cooperation Initiative. In the Centre, there is a drug task force headed by Bulgaria. Recently, in May, under the Greek presidency of the European Union, a third regional operation coordinated by the European Police Office took place, with very satisfactory results. My country is determined to continue to work within that mechanism to further improve the cooperation of the countries of the region and the subregion with regard to drug trafficking.

Before concluding, I should like to associate myself completely with the presidential statement to be made regarding the problem.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor in the Security Council in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Chile, I should like at the outset to thank you, Sir, for your words of welcome and to congratulate you on the excellent way you are conducting the work of the Council. Through you, I should also like to express my best wishes to the other Council members and to the Member States that are participating in this open meeting, and to thank everyone for their words of welcome.

My Government attaches great importance to the situation in Afghanistan. It is one of today's most important issues and is probably one of the greatest responsibilities ever assumed by the United Nations in its history.

I thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for their interesting and comprehensive briefings, particularly for their valuable information concerning recent events in Afghanistan, with respect both to the progress achieved and to the remaining challenges.

The task facing Afghanistan is enormous, because it is a matter of building a State and its institutions, of rebuilding its army and its police, of preparing a constitution and of effecting the profound cultural change implicit in the necessary respect for and recognition of human rights — all tasks of enormous scope. Building a democracy is not an easy task; it is obviously a long-term domestic challenge. What is indispensable in order to overcome the many obstacles inherent in the process of Afghanistan's democratic stabilization is that the international community must continue to resolutely support the country.

We fully support the process of preparing a new constitution. In that connection, we note the creation of a constitutional drafting commission whose members reflect Afghanistan's regional, ethnic, professional and religious diversity and, in particular, with the participation of women in the process.

While we welcome the public consultations that have begun, we share the concern expressed by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and by the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission at the increase in the number of threats, acts of intimidation, physical attacks and detentions carried out against citizens who have publicly expressed divergent political opinions or views. We believe that only through full and broad participation will the new constitution reflect the needs and aspirations of the Afghan people. Therefore, we hope that the agreed timetable will be respected and that a new founding charter can be adopted in September, as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno indicated.

As the Security Council, we have the additional responsibility of assisting whenever necessary in the preparation of free elections. In that context, we warmly welcome the Council mission to Afghanistan planned for October, aimed at supporting that very process.

We agree that security continues to be the most serious challenge facing Afghanistan. We also share the concern expressed at the increase in attacks against personnel of international humanitarian organizations, the International Security Assistance Force and the Afghan Interim Administration by Taliban groups and other rebel elements. We therefore share the view that the priority should be to speed up reform in the area of security, including disarmament, demobilization and the reintegration of ex-combatants.

We welcome the information provided by Mr. Costa about the work being done in Afghanistan by the Office on Drugs and Crime, which is all the more valuable given the serious obstacles that it has had to face in the performance of its duties, notwithstanding the cooperation and commitment of the Afghan Government.

In Afghanistan, concerns have been raised about the results of the rapid assessment survey of opium production conducted last March, which revealed that poppy crops have been detected for the first time in various districts of the country in areas beyond where they have been traditionally grown. Nevertheless, we note the success achieved in the eradication of crops in the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan. We also salute the anti-drug efforts being made by the United Kingdom and the police control activities being carried out by Germany.

The production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs reveal the vulnerabilities with which societies are confronted throughout the world. States cannot address this problem in isolation. It is a shared responsibility in which cooperation is essential.

While there is no single formula for dealing with this scourge, a number of approaches might possibly be helpful to this process. We agree on the importance of having a broad international approach under the auspices of the United Nations in support of the national drug strategy of the Afghan Interim Administration to eradicate the illicit cultivation of poppies, as well as efforts to combat drug trafficking, both in Afghanistan and in neighbouring countries.

In this connection, we welcome the recommendations contained in the most recent report of the Office on Drugs and Crime, including on the need to address certain problems that contributed to the emergence of an economy based on the production of opium. Noteworthy among these is support for farmers to produce viable alternative crops, including the provision of equipment, seeds and fertilizers; the generation of alternative sources of income for non-farm work and, in particular, for refugees returning to the country; employment for women and access to education for children; macroeconomic structures in which the market for raw materials can be disassociated from the perverse incentives of opium production; microcredits for farmers and returnees; and, of course, the effective implementation of the law against trafficking in opium.

Lastly, I wish to note our full agreement with the consensual recommendations to be expressed by the President of the Security Council in a statement concerning the need to appeal to the international community, in collaboration with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the Office on Drugs and Crime, to promote cooperation aimed at strengthening border controls between Afghanistan and its neighbours and at combating the traffic in and consumption of drugs. The challenge is undoubtedly enormous, but the first steps on this long road have already been taken.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): It is a privilege to follow Ambassador Muñoz in his first presentation to the Security Council. I congratulate him and wish him the best of fortune for his period in New York.

I shall say more on another occasion about the departure of Ambassador Wang Yingfan, but we all know we are going to miss his constructive wisdom in this Council and I wish him, too, the best of fortune in the future.

We have had excellent presentations this morning from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Executive Director Costa, and I thank them for that. I shall come back to some of their substantive remarks in a minute. The Greek presidency will make a statement for the European Union, which will set out the Union's policy on and commitment to Afghanistan — at a cost that includes, tragically, the loss of German and Spanish lives in recent incidents.

We think that we are reaching quite a critical moment in the Bonn process. The political deadlines have largely been met, but the security situation remains too fragile. We have now reached a key point in the regeneration of Afghanistan with the Constitutional Loya Jirga due to take place in October and the elections in June next year.

The International Security Assistance Force continues to assist with security in and around Kabul, but we need to bring similar benefits to the regions. We agree with the Under-Secretary-General's view that security across the country remains far from adequate. The provincial reconstruction teams will help with extending the authority of the central Administration, contributing to an improvement of security and facilitating security-sector reform and reconstruction. We expect the United Kingdom's provincial reconstruction team in Mazar-i-Sharif to be operational in early July.

Meanwhile, there are encouraging signs with the recent agreement on the payment of customs revenue by regional leaders to the central Administration. This needs to be implemented in full.

Better security for the Afghan people is essential to allow faster reconstruction and economic regeneration of Afghanistan to take place. The United Kingdom is committed to helping Afghanistan achieve long-term stability, security and prosperity and to extending the progress made so far in security-sector reform to all parts of the country. President Karzai, in his visit to the United Kingdom earlier this month, was firm in his commitment to forcing through change and to securing the future economic viability of Afghanistan.

Most of what I want to say, however, is on the drug scene. Overcoming the growth in the drug trade in Afghanistan is an essential aspect of the wider challenge of political and economic regeneration. The Afghan people need the opportunity to build sustainable livelihoods in security. For as long as regional leaders have access to income from the cultivation and trafficking of illegal drugs, they will pose a threat to the Transitional Administration's authority in the provinces.

Drug trafficking and drug abuse are pressing problems in all our societies, but the record of drug control everywhere shows that there are no quick fixes. Mr. Costa, in his excellent presentation, usefully reminded us that the illicit economy in Afghanistan includes many sectors beyond drugs. We have to be realistic and to temper high ambitions with reasonable expectations. It has always been clear that this year and next would be difficult because law enforcement has negligible reach outside Kabul and because it is too soon for development work to be delivering sustainable alternative livelihoods for farmers.

The General Assembly's special session on drugs in 1998 called on countries to adopt comprehensive national drug strategies. Some countries have done so, but not all. The Afghan Transitional Administration deserves much credit for its unequivocal stand on the drugs problem and for the adoption on 19 May of its own national drug control strategy. The Council should now put its weight behind the implementation of that strategy. To assist the Afghan authorities in their task, the United Kingdom will increase its counter-narcotics personnel in Afghanistan over the next few months from two officials currently to a total of 14 by the end of the year in Kabul and Kandahar. We will also be committing up to $114 million to counter-narcotics work in Afghanistan over the next three years. We urge other member States that can similarly to assist the Afghan authorities in the delivery of their drug control strategy and to encourage the international financial institutions and development agencies to address the issue of rural credit rapidly.

To facilitate the full funding of the Afghan drug control strategy, and better coordination of international support for it, the United Kingdom and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are ready to assist the Afghan Transitional Administration through the organization later in the year of a conference of donors, Afghan ministries and international agencies.

The United Kingdom welcomes the emphasis that your presidency, Sir, has placed on regional cooperation against the drug trade and the intention of the Afghan Transitional Administration to hold a meeting on this issue later this year in the framework of the Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations. The harm caused by the abuse of illegal drugs, the criminal profits from the drug trade and the international terrorism that it partly funds are threats not only to Western societies; many of Afghanistan's near neighbours know, to their cost, the damage that the drug trade can cause. Their efforts to combat it are welcome and essential, and they are a source of experience on which Afghanistan itself may usefully be able to draw.

The United Kingdom also welcomes the outcome of last month's conference in Paris on drug trafficking routes and the suggestions from Mr. Costa on how to give practical expression to the conference's conclusions and to the Paris Pact. Strengthening of controls at border crossing points is an important element. The United Kingdom is funding the construction of inspection facilities at the Afghan-Turkmen border, at Serhetabad, and contributing to the equipping and training of border control personnel in Uzbekistan. The United Kingdom is also helping, jointly with Iran, to train Afghan border control personnel.

The problem of Afghan drugs cannot be solved only by action within Afghanistan. Stifling the trade in illegal drugs further afield contributes to reducing the market for the raw product and gives the Afghan authorities a better chance of succeeding in their own campaign.

The Security Council does not need to become involved in the detail of counter-narcotics work, but it is essential that we remain focused on the long-term security and political stability of Afghanistan, thereby creating the conditions in which success against the drug trade becomes possible. The presidential statement we shall adopt later in this debate meets this requirement admirably.

Mr. Arias (Spain)(*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by saying how much I regret the fact that Ambassador Wang is leaving us. I am convinced that the entire Council, both permanent and non-permanent

members, will miss him, because of the common sense, moderation and expertise that he has always shown. At the same time, I want to welcome our Chilean colleague, and I wish him every success in his stay here on the Security Council and in the United Nations.

We are grateful to Mr. Guehenno for his briefing and to Mr. Costa for his very complete presentation. Spain supports the statement that will be made by Greece on behalf of the European Union.

As has been amply stated, the entire process in Afghanistan is threatened by the deterioration of security. The increase in crime, daily acts of intimidation, battling among factions, the major activity of elements linked to the Taliban and drug trafficking are all endangering the reconstruction effort. Unfortunately, for many, drugs have become a way of life in Afghanistan, and the challenge is precisely to change this way of life. It is necessary to act against the flow of money caused by the trafficking and to avoid having the money give increasing power to the warlords.

We want to see the completion of the 10-year strategy for national drug control, prepared by the Afghan Government with the assistance of the United Kingdom, and we support the emphasis that has been placed on the rule of law, on the reduction of demand and on promotion of an alternative sustainable development.

Links between the illicit traffic in drugs, organized crime and financing of terrorist activities have been reiterated in different United Nations forums. Mr. Costa has enlightened us today by highlighting the fact that the international fight against drugs means carrying out development programmes and strengthening activities with respect to reduction in supply, but also of demand. It is necessary to focus on a global approach and to address all three areas: production, trafficking and consumption.

Together with shared responsibility between consumer and producer countries, another principal area is the need to consider the drug question as an integral part of policy development and human rights. All of our countries, together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), need to increase cooperation in order to strengthen border controls, to identify and dismantle groups involved in drug trafficking, to carry out programmes to reduce demand and to offer assistance in the area of information.

The Paris Conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe emphasized the need for a global, well balanced and coordinated approach at the international and regional levels to tackle the drug threat. It is our hope that the so-called Paris Covenant will be fulfilled by everyone.

Lastly, in the sphere of international action, we invite the parties to the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances to contribute towards the seizure of goods in cases of drug trafficking, including money-laundering, to the specialized international organizations that are involved in the fight against drug trafficking. This is an essential aspect of international action that has already been carried out by Spain through its contribution to UNODC.

The President: With the Members' permission, I would like to – I have to – draw your attention to the need to respect this Council. I understand that we are not in a Broadway theatre, and what is going on is not exactly a musical, but I would still request all present kindly to switch off their mobile phones and put them on silent mode. Since the last time I checked — in fact, double-checked — it was confirmed to me that all modern mobile phones are equipped with this feature. They vibrate or they do something else, but they do not produce sound which distracts speakers.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): At the outset, I would also like to say how much we, my delegation and I myself, regret seeing Ambassador Wang depart, and I would like to thank him for his always friendly and professional collegiality that he has shared with everyone in this Council. I would like to wish him well in his future very responsible job that he is about to take up. I would also like to welcome Mr. Muñoz in the crowd here and to wish him a good start. I promise him our collegial support.

I would then like to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Costa for the detailed and comprehensive reports they gave us this morning. I would also say that my delegation fully associates itself with the statement that will be made by Greece on behalf of the European Union later in this discussion.

As we have heard this morning in the impressive statements of Mr. Costa and Mr. Guéhenno, security is of the essence in the present state of the implementation of the Bonn process in Afghanistan. Security in Afghanistan at present is severely

threatened by terrorism and organized crime, the major challenges facing foreign policy in the twenty-first century. These plagues of humanity can be defeated only if we join forces and take action on a global scale. In this context, the issue of drug production and smuggling from Afghanistan is of paramount importance, and I therefore welcome the initiative of the Russian presidency to have this discussion here today. The presidential statement that will be adopted at the end of this meeting will provide further evidence of the resolve of the international community to make use of its tools in the fight again the drug problem. The relevance of today's debate has, once again, been sadly confirmed by the recent killing of seven Afghans involved in anti-drug programmes in Uruzgan province.

Sadly, opium and heroin production in Afghanistan has risen again dramatically in recent times. Afghanistan, once again, is expected to be the largest producer of opium in 2003. All efforts of the international community in this regard have so far proven to be insufficient. Therefore, we must search for comprehensive ways of effectively reducing and combating this threat to Afghanistan itself, the region and other countries. This fight is not just about drugs. There are close links between drug crimes and other forms of organized crime: arms smuggling, human trafficking, money laundering, corruption and terrorism.

The current situation in Afghanistan is marked by the fact that more than 20 years of armed conflict eradicated many basic State structures, prevented economic development and produced a fragmented, yet fully armed, society. A continuing atmosphere of insecurity and instability, in particular outside Kabul, makes security-sector reform the most important and pressing task, as well as a prerequisite for the fight against illicit opium production and trafficking.

Drug smuggling and the structures of organized crime pose a particular threat to young democracies. The rule of law and State authority are being undermined, and, especially along the smuggling routes, ever more serious addiction problems emerge, with all their consequences. The reconstruction of a functioning police system throughout Afghanistan is a vital pillar of the international efforts to create security for this war-torn country. Against that background and at the request of the United Nations and the former Afghan Interim Administration, Germany assumed the lead role in rebuilding the Afghan police force, including the anti-drug and border police forces - a task that is closely linked to that done by the other four lead nations in the security sector and in their respective areas of responsibility.

In particular, our support in training personnel and in providing equipment for the Afghan anti-drug police force is being closely coordinated with other States and institutions. In addition to Britain, which has assumed the leading role in the fight against illicit drugs, I would like to give special mention to the United States and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We are pleased that France, too, wants to help establish a national drugs laboratory.

We can be proud of what has been achieved so far in this context. The infrastructures of the national criminal police and the national drug police have been re-established with contributions from the United Kingdom, the United States and the United Nations Drug Control Programme. The police force in Kabul is able to work again, thanks to the reconstruction of its buildings and to new equipment. The reorganization of the police and of the Ministry of the Interior is making good progress. A structure for the national police and the new Afghan Border Police, comprising border patrol and immigration units, has been established, and Afghanistan has become a member of Interpol. Building the Border Police will be another vital task, linking both the anti-drug efforts and the rebuilding of the Afghan National Army with the police project.

However, we will not have any real success until the Afghan police force can ensure law and order in those provinces hit especially hard by drugs. We know that the Afghan Government has good intentions but neither the means nor the strength necessary to assert its authority outside Kabul. Extending the reconstruction of the security sector to the provinces is the big challenge now. In many provinces, that challenge will be chiefly financial and organizational. In others, it will also entail important security problems that cannot be tackled by police means alone. To successfully integrate all provinces by the end of 2004, instability resulting from fighting among regional commanders, ethnic groups and their militias must end.

In the reconstruction of the Afghan police, financing has been a problem, though not a restricting factor as yet. The principal source for police salaries, the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan,

administered by the United Nations Development Programme is struggling with insufficient funding, among other difficulties. International contributions towards police reconstruction also do not fully meet the needs. The overall cost of reconstruction, equipment and training for the national police over the next four years has been estimated at approximately 180 million euros, excluding salaries. The reconstruction of the Afghan Border Police is estimated at approximately 200 million euros over the next four years. The targeted amount of donor participation has, to this point, fallen short of that mark. The level of development and achievement in the security sector and the success of the fight against opium production and trafficking in Afghanistan will depend not only on positive developments in the general security situation, but in particular on the participation of the international community.

Combating drug production and trafficking will be the litmus test of the ability of lead nations in the security sector to achieve synergies in their overlapping fields of responsibility. That will continue to require well coordinated efforts and commitment from all Afghan and international actors in the security sector. However, the success of all our efforts to eradicate illicit drugs depends not only on credible enforcement measures but, at the same time, on the availability of alternative sources of livelihood for farmers and on a comprehensive improvement of the socio-political environment. Germany is ready to continue its contribution in that regard in the interest of the people of Afghanistan.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President, for hosting this meeting today on the pressing problem of Afghan narcotics. I, too, would like to join other colleagues in expressing my appreciation, and the appreciation of our delegation, for the fine work that Ambassador Wang Yingfan of China has carried out here during his tenure as Permanent Representative of his country to the United Nations. We will miss his wise counsel. We have very fond memories of the work that we have done together here. I would also like to join our colleagues in welcoming Mr. Heraldo Muñoz of Chile as he takes up his responsibilities as representative of his country to the United Nations.

The 2003 Afghan opium poppy harvest may be as large as that of 2002, which was a record year. The resurgence of opium cultivation further erodes the security environment in Afghanistan and threatens reconstruction efforts. The message here is that we should do more and should do it better. Trade in Afghan opiates generates funds that corrupt institutions, finance terrorism and insurgency and destabilize the region. These funds also support the organized crime syndicates involved in the grey arms market. Moreover, the opium trade spreads drug abuse and HIV/AIDS across the region, including to Russia and Europe. A shift in opium poppy cultivation from prime agricultural land to more remote areas, as reported in the April 2003 Opium Rapid Assessment, of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, is an alarming trend. It shows that poppy production is being pushed into more marginal areas. It also demonstrates the need to mainstream counter-narcotics programmes into overall development assistance and the urgent need to establish law and order in rural areas.

The opium economy cannot be addressed in isolation. Enforcement of the poppy ban needs to be increased. Farmers require viable alternatives to illicit crops and credit is needed throughout rural Afghanistan. As we fight production in Afghanistan, we also need to deal with trafficking in neighbouring States.

Counter-narcotic efforts will be most successful in the larger context of economic and democratic reform, but they cannot succeed until basic security and the rule of law are established in areas outside of Kabul. The United States is committed to helping build the Afghan Transitional Authority's capacity to run effective counter-narcotics programmes and reduce poppy cultivation and trade through alternative livelihood programmes. We are working with the Transitional Authority to build a national police force.

My Government supports the United Kingdom's lead on counter-narcotics and the German lead on police training. We are showing this support with more than $60 million in funding in these areas. My Government also supports many projects developed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. We are contributing to alternative development, drug treatment and reduction programmes, and we are helping to build Afghan national capacities for drug policy-making and drug enforcement. In coordination with the German Government, we are implementing a $26 million police and justice programme that includes equipment and training for the Afghan police and the establishment of an identification card system and a communications

network for the police. We are in the process of planning, with our German colleagues, an expansion of police training in the provinces. Outside of Kabul, including in Afghanistan's neighbouring States, we need to seek new ways and methods of joining forces through coordination, better information sharing, regional approaches and, when the circumstances are right, through combined or joint operations, as we have done on certain occasions.

The United States strongly supports the efforts in Afghanistan of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime, as well as the proposals of the Paris Pact put forward by Executive Director Costa in Paris last month. My Government is also committed to helping establish the border police, and we are working closely with Germany and the rest of the international community to coordinate assistance for this important function. We are providing communications equipment for the launch of the border police takeover of Kabul International Airport as of 1 June. We remain committed to working with Pakistan and Afghanistan's Central Asian neighbours to strengthen legal and institutional capacities to confront the drug trafficking that poses as much a threat to their own integrity as it does to that of Afghanistan. We urge Council members and other Member States, especially those most threatened by the trade in heroine originating in Afghanistan to join in combating this evil trade before its influence becomes even more pervasive.

The United States remains concerned at the upswing in violence in both Kabul and the provinces, most recently with the suicide attack that killed four German personnel of the International Security Assistance Force on 7 June. Taliban and Al Qaeda elements now appear to be targeting foreigners, military and civilian, rather than engaging coalition forces. Coalition forces continue to root out these elements in the field, while the Afghan national army and Afghan police are trained. The Afghan national army has deployed some of its first trained units to work with United States special forces, most notably in Bamian, and has received high marks. The Afghan national army has also suffered its first casualties from hostile fire.

We have helped to put up three provincial reconstruction teams, or PRTs, in Gardez, Bamian and Konduz, and a total of eight such teams are currently planned with an option for creating more of them. We are looking at ways to improve those teams and enhance their capability. We believe provincial reconstruction teams have made significant contributions to stability within their area of operations, and we are working with other countries to lead additional such teams.

With regard to the national elections to be held in June 2004, as called for by the Bonn Agreement, we are told that UNAMA has begun preparatory work, including voter education and registration programmes. However, we have as yet to see a formal plan and the associated budget for this effort, and time is growing short. We understand that the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division proposes to fund the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in this area out of voluntary contributions at a cost that is estimated at more than $100 million. The United States urges all countries to provide the maximum financial support possible for the electoral process in Afghanistan.

We note with concern that the Afghan Transitional Authority is facing a shortfall of $181 million in their recurring budget. It is critically important that donors accelerate pledges to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, and identify additional funds to cover that gap. The United States will soon disperse $20 million to the Trust Fund and will review possible additional contributions. We would urge other member countries in a position to do so to contribute to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund as soon as possible.

Finally, while our policy discussions here in the Council today are important, ultimately the resources that we devote to dealing with Afghanistan's serious problems can make a decisive difference. In addition to the considerable outlay for Operation Enduring Freedom, the United States will expend almost $1 billion this year on reconstruction and humanitarian relief and for budget support in Afghanistan. We invite Council members and other Member States to provide timely and significant financial support, as well.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I would like to thank the Russian Mission for arranging this public meeting. I also wish to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Costa for their detailed briefings.

We are glad to note that with the support and assistance from the international community the Afghan Transitional Administration, headed by

President Karzai, has made unremitting efforts to reach the goals set in the Bonn Agreement. Afghanistan is now preparing for the Constitutional Loya Jirga, to be held this October. We hope that the new Constitution will serve to reinforce ethnic unity, social justice, rule of law and national stability.

At the present time, security is still an issue of concern in some places in Afghanistan, as the recent suicide bombing attacks against the International Security Assistance Force has clearly shown. The international community should adopt peaceful measures to assist the Transitional Administration in its efforts to build the army and police forces and complete the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration at an early date.

We would also like to urge the various parties in Afghanistan to demonstrate good faith in pursuing national reconciliation and thus contribute to peace in and the reconstruction of their country.

Drugs are the enemy of the entire human race, and the drug issue has been closely linked with such organized transnational crimes as terrorism, money-laundering and human trafficking. The drug problem in Afghanistan has seriously affected the country's stability and economic development and has become an increasingly destabilizing factor in the region. Curbing drug production and cracking down on drug smuggling are common objectives for Afghanistan and other countries in the region, as well as for the entire international community.

The Chinese Government appreciates the measures adopted by the Transitional Administration to root out the drug problem and the positive role played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Kingdom and France in this regard.

We favour taking timely action to formulate an international strategy against the Afghan drug threat and promote international cooperation in related areas under the leadership of the United Nations. In order to sever the source of drugs and effectively resolve the drug issue, efforts should be made to develop substitute crops and improve the rural economic and social environment so that farmers will earn income through legal means and free themselves from their dependence on drug production. The international community should increase its input in and funding for assistance to the Transitional Administration in policy-making.

During the recent visit of Vice-President Shaharani to China, the two sides signed a number of agreements, including one on economic and technical cooperation. We are now speeding up construction of the Parwan irrigation project and Kabul public hospital project. China will continue to cooperate with the various parties and work together with them for peace and reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Finally, I once again thank the Council President and colleagues for the kind and encouraging words that they have addressed to me.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like at the outset to address to Ambassador Wang my words of thanks. He has been a very inspiring voice on this Council. His wisdom, consistently constructive attitude, tolerance and conviviality will be missed by all members of the Council. I wish him great success as he embarks on his new mission from his great country. I am sure that his inspiring leadership will be a positive factor in this new phase.

I would also like to extend to Ambassador Muñoz of Chile a very warm welcome. I look forward to working very closely with him, as I did with his predecessor.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate to discuss ways to reinforce peace and security in Afghanistan and especially for giving the Council the opportunity to address the combat against the production and trafficking of illicit drugs in Afghanistan. I join previous speakers in thanking Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Costa for their excellent and substantial briefings before the Council.

Afghanistan has been in the past years the focus of concern of the international community since it became a centre for international terrorist networks, as well as one of the world's largest sources of drugs — twin scourges that the international community has identified as constituting serious threats to international peace and security.

The Bonn Agreement, signed in December 2001 by representatives of several anti-Taliban factions and political groups, has set the framework for international peacekeeping, the establishment of peace and security, the reconstruction of the country, the protection and promotion of fundamental human rights, demilitarization and social integration.

As was stressed in Mr. Brahimi's last briefing to the Council on 6 May, Afghanistan is still far from meeting the conditions for the complete implementation of the Bonn Agreement. Security remains the most serious challenge and must be improved to allow the establishment of the rule of law to promote reconstruction efforts and facilitate the success of the complex political process, including the development of a new Constitution and the holding of free and fair elections.

The work accomplished and efforts undertaken by the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany, as lead nations, in assisting the Afghan authorities in implementing the Bonn Agreement are very commendable. The international community's assistance, if integrated in a broader context of reconstruction for development and closer cooperation between Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, could enable the Afghan Transitional Administration to better neutralize the threat posed by the remnants of the Taliban and by the illicit production and trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan.

The production of illicit drugs in Afghanistan is indeed an extremely sensitive issue and remains a matter of great international concern. The substitution programme of poppy cultivation administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and by the Afghan National Security Council can constitute a coherent strategy, but it will produce results only when security is established and the economic situation is stabilized.

In our view, such a programme should be reinforced through the implementation of the measures contained in President Karzai's recent plan, particularly through the promotion of alternative means of earning a living and fresh professional opportunities for the Afghan rural population; through the assistance of the Afghan Transitional Administration in enforcing the ban introduced in January 2002 on opium poppy cultivation and the illicit production, manufacture and trafficking of drugs; through identifying and disabling the entire network of trans-border criminal groups involved in the supply and sale of drugs from Afghanistan, including the prevention of drugs-related money-laundering; and through effective measures to curtail the demand for and trafficking in those illicit drugs in the countries of destination.

Assistance in combating illicit opium cultivation and the trafficking of drugs is essential, not just for Afghanistan itself, but for the Central Asian region as a whole. Any increase in opium output in Afghanistan continues to have a very negative impact on the economy and the development of neighbouring countries, now mainly transit routes of illicit traffic. While they are only transit routes, they are increasingly becoming consumption markets, bringing devastating socio-economic consequences and posing a security threat to the whole region.

Therefore, we believe that the lead nations, as well as the rest of the international community, should reinforce their assistance to the drug-control efforts of Afghanistan's transitional authorities, particularly in developing and strengthening African drug control and law-enforcement agencies, in assisting in the creation of a judicial framework and institutions consistent with international conventions, and in enhancing regional cross-border cooperation. The production and trafficking of illicit drugs in Afghanistan constitutes a global challenge. The Afghan Transitional Administration can succeed only if the international community continues to provide its support for the sustainable development and long-term security of the country.

Let me reaffirm my country's firm conviction that peace and security will be possible in Afghanistan only if and when the international community succeeds in decisively redressing the growth of opium cultivation, which makes it the crux of the war that is still to be fully controlled in that country. In that connection, and in conclusion, I should like to express my delegation's full support for the presidential statement that will be issued as the outcome of this Security Council meeting on the problem of drugs in Afghanistan.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): Before I begin, I should like to join previous speakers in conveying my delegation's best wishes to Ambassador Wang Yingfan and to say that we shall sorely miss his presence at this table. We should also like to extend a very warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of Chile, Ambassador Muñoz.

We should like to thank you, Sir, for convening this meeting on Afghanistan, with its special emphasis on the problem of illicit narcotics. In that regard, I also wish to thank Mr. Guéhenno and Mr. Costa for their briefings.

Afghanistan today is a major source of the world's opium. It is also a major point of origin for much of the illicit morphine, heroin and hashish that are available on the street. Therefore, this drug problem is not just Afghanistan's problem; it is also a serious problem for Afghanistan's neighbours and for the regions beyond.

Over the years, in an environment of conflict and lawlessness, Afghanistan became a primary locus for drugs. Although opium production in Afghanistan almost disappeared in the year 2000, it has since increased significantly. Last year, opium production stood at 3,400 metric tons. The projections for this year are for nearly the same level of production, if not more. An area whose size is estimated at 74,000 hectares remains under opium cultivation.

The problem of illicit narcotics in Afghanistan is a cross-cutting one that not only affects that country's relief and reconstruction efforts but is also exacerbated by the general lack of security and lawlessness in the country. Ordinary Afghans continue to live in fear of armed men, from ordinary brigands to powerful warlords. Factional fighting and ethnic and even internecine conflict mar much of the landscape. Added to that are the activities of the Taliban and of other rebel elements that have recently targeted not only coalition forces and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) personnel but also international humanitarian staff, including demining personnel and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials. Pakistan unequivocally condemns all such acts, as well as attempts to undermine the authority of President Karzai. Only last week, President Musharraf once again made it amply clear that the Taliban was not good for Afghanistan and that it is not good for Pakistan.

For Pakistan, the Government of President Karzai is the only legitimate authority, and therefore only its writ — not those of the self-styled commanders — should run throughout the country. Until the authority of the Afghan Transitional Administration is extended throughout the country, the lawlessness and the security threats will continue. The lack of security and of law and order is the basic catalyst for the illicit production and trafficking of narcotics. Such activities are fed by abject poverty and a lack of alternative livelihoods. They are perpetuated and protected by influential commanders who defy the decrees of the central Government and flout the ban on growing poppy. As long as the drug trade flourishes, the prospects of peace and stability in Afghanistan — as well as the chances for its recovery and reconstruction — will remain dim.

The drug problem in Afghanistan also has serious implications for its neighbours, particularly Pakistan. Before the conflict began in Afghanistan, the number of drug addicts in Pakistan was negligible; today, there are nearly 3.5 million of them. That is in spite of the fact that Pakistan has taken strong and effective measures to deal with drug production on its side of the border. Pakistan is no longer a poppy-cultivating country; its production of poppy, amounting to 800 metric tons in the early 1990s, has now come down to almost zero. Yet the illicit trafficking in narcotics from Afghanistan continues. Last year, Pakistani law-enforcement authorities seized 2,700 kilograms of opium, 6,800 kilograms of morphine, 5,900 kilograms of heroin and 85,000 kilograms of hashish. That amounted to 67 per cent by volume of all the drugs seized in the region surrounding Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the illicit outflow of narcotics has increased even more this year. In one raid alone, our authorities intercepted 1,350 kilograms of heroin.

The problem of the production of and trade in illicit narcotics originating in Afghanistan is growing. In our view, there needs to be a comprehensive and coordinated approach, not only to interdict the illicit trafficking of drugs, but also to deal with their source. Pakistan welcomes the decree issued by President Karzai on 17 January 2003 banning the production of opium, and calls on the international community to provide all possible assistance to the Afghan Government to help implement its national drug control strategy to eliminate drug production by the year 2013. We also support the lead role taken by the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively, to help build Afghan capacities in counter-narcotics and law enforcement. Pakistan also participated in the Ministerial Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, held last month in Paris, and supports its outcome as another milestone in evolving a comprehensive approach to the drug problem in Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, such a comprehensive approach must begin with effective measures inside Afghanistan. These include strengthened law enforcement and the extension of State authority to all parts of the country, especially over all the border controls and customs

posts. At the same time, there is also a need to wean Afghan farmers away from poppy cultivation. This will require the provision of immediate assistance in crop substitution and income support to the affected Afghan farmers and landless labourers. Anti-opium production strategies must be mainstreamed into the national reconstruction programmes and integrated into rural development strategies, giving priority to major areas under opium poppy cultivation, especially in the south-eastern areas of Afghanistan.

Pakistan, with its own successes in curbing opium production, providing alternative livelihoods to farmers and drug interdiction, stands ready to work with the international community to assist the Afghan Government in meeting its counter-narcotics goals. The best framework for promoting regional cooperation in counter-narcotics has remained the existing framework of the existing framework of the "six-plus-two" mechanism, which has had a successful history, at least in the area of regional counter-narcotics cooperation.

However, no counter-narcotics mechanism can be effective unless neighbouring countries continue to receive international support. Neighbouring States, such as Pakistan, are in the front line of the war against drugs and face the brunt of its consequences. It is they who, after Afghanistan, require the most assistance in counter-narcotics, especially in bolstering their law enforcement capacities. A coordinated approach based on sharing information - involving Afghan authorities, the neighbouring States and coalition forces – can make effective headway in dismantling illegal drug laboratories and destroying stockpiles of narcotics.

While interdiction methods are useful, the problem of illicit drug manufacturing cannot be effectively tackled unless the chemical precursors used in drug manufacturing — especially acetic anhydride — can be prevented from reaching the illicit laboratories in Afghanistan. The most effective way to do this is to trace back the supply of the precursors to their countries of origin and to eliminate them at source. In this, countries which produce these chemicals bear a special responsibility to prevent their outflow. Without the precursors, there would be no illicit heroin or morphine.

No measure to counter the threat of drugs can be effective unless it can address both the demand and the supply sides of the illegal drug trade. Reducing the supply of drugs must take place alongside effective demand reduction. In dismantling the networks engaged in smuggling illicit narcotics, special attention needs to be paid also to tracing back and prosecuting its financing at source. Demand-reduction strategies must be evolved not only for Afghanistan and the transit States, but also for countries which are the destination markets. The street price for drugs in Afghanistan or its neighbouring States is negligible compared to that available in the destination States. Unless strong enforcement action is taken — not only against the suppliers, but also against the consumers and financiers of illicit drugs in destination States — the drug problem will not go away.

Let me conclude by once again strongly supporting the pledges made by President Karzai to eliminate illicit drug production and to control all trafficking and abuse of drugs in Afghanistan. It is in the interest of all of us to work together to assist Afghanistan in this endeavour. We look forward to the day when Afghanistan is free from drugs and its neighbours, especially Pakistan, are also safe from this scourge.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

The successful conclusion of the historic transformation of Afghan society is a critical challenge to the United Nations today. Significant work has already been done. Under the Bonn Agreement, normalcy is gradually being built in Afghanistan and the national State institutions are gaining strength. To say that the peace process has been concluded is clearly premature, however. We have all seen the difficulties encountered by the Afghan Transitional Administration in overcoming the legacies of the past. The terrorist actions against the International Security Assistance Force and the coalition forces are visible proof of the danger of a resurgence of the Taliban and other extremist elements.

It is necessary to continue to provide multilateral assistance to the central Afghan Government in order to enhance its ability to govern the country independently. We are convinced that we must support those Afghan forces that have proven themselves to be consistent fighters against the Taliban regime and the Al Qaeda terrorist network. It is also important to avert interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, including through the development of specific measures for the

practical implementation of the Declaration on Good-neighbourly Relations, adopted in Kabul in December 2002.

The Security Council has regularly monitored the situation in Afghanistan. We have already discussed the issues of security, political reform and economic assistance. It is important to pursue a focused discussion of Afghanistan's current problems. Russia has today suggested centring the discussion on the challenge of combating the Afghan drug threat.

Russia is located on the historic crossroads of world trade routes that now overlap the channels of world drug trafficking. Because of its geographic situation, attempts have been made to use our country as a convenient transit bridge for smuggling Afghan drugs. This is particularly true with respect to heroin from Afghanistan, which is spreading ever further, not only in Russia and Europe as a whole, but also in North America, Japan and Australia.

Hence the task of developing a comprehensive approach to combating the Afghan drug threat. We need an effective and comprehensive strategy of international action, whereby internal Afghan measures are organically supplemented by efforts around and beyond Afghanistan.

We deeply appreciate the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the efforts of donor countries in response to the decisions taken at the Geneva conference on Afghanistan, held in April 2002, to resolve the drug problem within that country. Russia supports the measures adopted within this process to establish anti-drug agencies in Afghanistan, strengthen their potential and the capacities of law enforcement agencies and develop alternative economics. We also note the contribution made by the lead countries in these areas: the United Kingdom in combating drugs, Germany in police training and Italy in criminal justice.

It is clear, however, that the efforts under way remain inadequate. We need in particular to organize the systematic search for and destruction within Afghanistan of illegal narcotics caches and underground laboratories. Greater attention must be focused on intercepting drug couriers. We see once again the ineluctable link between the tasks of fighting drugs and of establishing security, law and order in Afghanistan. We expect this issue to be taken seriously into account by the provincial reconstruction teams.

Considering the ongoing gravity of the problem, the countries neighbouring Afghanistan must undertake additional and sometimes extraordinary steps to strengthen counter-narcotic capacities along their borders. Establishing anti-narcotic security belts — first on Afghanistan's borders and then on those of its neighbours — would help substantially to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to sever flows of Afghan opiates into major markets. Russia actively interacts in this sphere with United Nations agencies and countries of the region. A large portion of Russia's annual voluntary contribution to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) fund is used precisely for these purposes. As a result of implementing, under its auspices, a project in 2000 and 2001 to assist a team of the Russian federal border service in Tajikistan, our success in combating smuggling on the Tajik and Afghan border was enhanced nine-fold. Last year, Russian border officials seized more than 4 tonnes of narcotics, including more than 2.3 tonnes of heroin. Since the beginning of this year alone, we have seized about 2 tonnes of narcotics, 1.2 tonnes of which was heroin.

We are seeing greater effectiveness in counter-narcotic cooperation through the agencies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, within which special mechanisms and agencies have been set up.

The problem of the drug threat from Afghanistan is not confined to regional frameworks. It affects the vitally important security spheres of the entire international community. The illegal trade in Afghan drugs is truly global and justifiably placed within a category of new threats. The drug threat is closely connected with money laundering. It breeds organized crime. It provides financial resources for those who organize terrorist acts. We are fully justified in talking about a new threat, called narco-terrorism.

In these circumstances, it is critical to step up multilateral cooperation to strengthen border, customs and law enforcement agencies of countries that lie along the corridors of the illegal drug routes for Afghan narcotics. It is very important to implement the measures approved in the ministerial document of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and in the Paris Pact. It is in the interest of the entire international community to identify and neutralize the whole chain of transnational criminal groups that

deliver and market Afghan drugs, including taking steps to stop the laundering of drug income.

We need to develop practical steps to cut off supplies into Afghanistan of precursors for the production of heroin. Also, this is an external, not internal, factor in the Afghan drug threat. It is up to foreign Governments to make efforts to reduce the demand for drugs, including preventive measures, treatment and the rehabilitation of drug addicts. We hope that today's multilaterally engaged discussion will allow the Security Council to make a decision focused on joining, under United Nations auspices, the efforts of all interested States, of international financial and other organizations, in order to implement, in practice, a multilateral, comprehensive approach to combating the Afghan drug threat, in the interest of creating the basis for political, social and economic stability in Afghanistan and for strengthening security in the region.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan): I would like to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for convening this open meeting. Your great experience and knowledge about Afghanistan and the Afghanistan problem will be very helpful in guiding this meeting and also for the drafting and approval of the Presidential statement to be delivered at the conclusion of this meeting.

This debate will allow Security Council and other United Nations members to express their views on the subject. Furthermore, such an open debate presents an occasion to evaluate and assess the politico-economic developments of the country and the implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions. The views expressed by Member States could also be applied to the formulation of new strategies and policies to promote and consolidate peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the region.

Last month, on 6 May 2003, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Ambassador Brahimi, presented a comprehensive report on the situation in Afghanistan. I am very grateful to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guehenno for his briefing today. I also thank Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Their statements were very interesting and essential. Mr. Brahimi described the continued implementation last month of the Bonn Agreement by the Transitional Afghan Government and the challenges facing the Government in discharging its functions. Since his briefing was comprehensive and covered a broad range of issues, we would like to pinpoint some aspects of the developments in Afghanistan between the last briefing and that of today. We would like to highlight some major problems that need the sustained attention of the international community.

First of all, there is the recovery and reconstruction and its impacts on peace and security. The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution on Afghanistan adopted on 6 December 2002 (A/RES/57/113 A-B), underscored the interrelationship between reconstruction and the consolidation of peace. The fourteenth preambular paragraph of Part A of the resolution recognized the need for continued strong international commitment to rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes and indicated that visible progress in this regard could further enhance the Government's authority and greatly contribute to the peace process. The same resolution, in the sixteenth preambular paragraph of Part B, clearly indicated that economic recovery and reconstruction in Afghanistan and the security and improvement in the lives of the Afghan people are closely interrelated.

Furthermore, the United Nations Secretary-General, in paragraph 7 of his report (S/2002/737) dated 11 July 2002 concerning the enhancement of security in Afghanistan insightfully refers to the drastic impact of limited resources on the efforts of the Transitional Government to widen its authority:

> "The Interim Administration's efforts to extend its influence and control have been hampered ... by the limited resources at its disposal. These limitations have affected its ability to provide services, build roads and create jobs".

Again, in paragraph 70 of his recent report dated 18 March 2003 (A/57/762-S/2003/333), the Secretary-General rightly reiterates the importance of reconstruction in the country:

> "Too many Afghans remain dissatisfied at the pace of reconstruction and economic development, and await their 'peace dividend'".

We strongly believe that the consolidation of peace, security and stability largely depends on the international community's sustained engagement in providing the necessary assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan's social and economic infrastructure. It is worthwhile mentioning before the Council the two major lessons learned during the past 18 months since the establishment of the new Government in Afghanistan.

First, it is imperative that the international community channels its assistance through the national development budget of the Afghan Transitional Authority and focuses its attention on building the capacity of the Afghan Government. A relevant mechanism for the monitoring of the expenditures could be established.

Secondly, additional resources are needed, beyond the pledges made in Tokyo in January 2002. In view of the level of destruction caused by 23 years of conflict and based on the in-depth evaluation carried out by the Afghan Government, President Karzai, during his recent official visit to the United Kingdom, renewed his plea for an additional $15 billion for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. In that regard, a new pledging conference should be considered.

With respect to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), the Afghan Government is of the view that effective DDR is a central element of long-term peace-building and conflict prevention in Afghanistan. It was with that conviction that Afghanistan attended the second Tokyo conference, hosted by the Government of Japan on 22 February 2003, which aimed to mobilize international support for the process of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. In that regard, we will launch the DDR process by the end of this month, in accordance with a timetable and appropriate plan. The Afghan Ministry of Defence and other ministries concerned are deploying major efforts in that field.

It is obvious that disarmament entails the collection of arms and ammunition; demobilization implies the separation of combatants from military service or armed troops. Unlike disarmament and demobilization, which can be described as being time-bound, reintegration is a process. As such, it demands a sustainable reintegration programme encompassing the immediate and long-term social and economic inclusion of former combatants into their communities as productive and law-abiding citizens. The viable creation of economic growth and development, the establishment of income-generating projects, the provision of education and training programmes and the response to the psycho-social impact of war should all be part of that programme. This requires the launching of major projects, such as the reconstruction of highways, providing employment for workers. It also requires the construction or reconstruction of major installations such as textile and cement factories. However, if DDR is to be an integrated process, there can be no gaps or delays as a result of slow funding. The success of DDR has major implications for the security of the country. It is fundamentally dependent on economic growth and on the creation of employment. Ex-combatants must be able to earn a living by legitimate means.

We would like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to express the gratitude of the Afghan Government to the Government of Japan, as the lead nation, for its generous contribution in funding the DDR process in Afghanistan.

With respect to narcotics, which has been the main topic of discussion today, poppy cultivation and the production and trafficking of illicit drugs remain a major national concern. Afghanistan's opium economy grew as a consequence of the degradation of agriculture and economic infrastructure due to more than 23 years of war. There is a strong political will for the eradication of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. To that effect, the Afghan Government has issued two decrees banning the cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs. However, the practical success of the implementation of those decrees depends to a large extent upon credible law enforcement and the availability of alternative sources of livelihood for farmers. Supporting the central institutions of Afghanistan in establishing and consolidating effective Government control over the opium-producing areas is essential for any drug control strategy. Likewise, other initiatives should focus on re-establishing a sustainable rural economy not only for landowners but also for seasonal labourers and labour forces involved in the opium economy. We feel that much attention is given to the cultivation of poppy in Afghanistan. Giving attention to the cultivation of a

few alternative crops with an international market value is vitally important.

To that effect, the Afghan Government has prepared the Afghan national drug control strategy. That strategy encompasses programmes for alternative livelihoods, the enhancement of the capacity of law enforcement agencies and the improvement of national legislation. My Government, with the support of the international community, is committed to eliminating opium production through the implementation of the national long-term drug control strategy by the year 2013.

We are thankful to the Government of the United Kingdom, which, as lead nation, is working closely with Afghan authorities, donors and the United Nations to integrate provincial anti-drug activities and to identify quick-impact and long-term alternative livelihood programmes and infrastructure projects.

We would also like to thank France for convening the conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe, held in Paris on 21 and 22 May. We are committed to cooperating closely with all regional and international efforts to combat the cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs. The Afghan authorities welcome the decision taken by the Group of Eight to assist Afghanistan in its effort to combat the cultivation and trafficking of opium.

On 18 May 2003, in order to strengthen and consolidate the Afghan structures and to improve financial and administrative systems in Afghanistan, the National Security Council of Afghanistan held a meeting and took a number of important decisions in the presence of the governors of provinces that generate customs revenues. Under article 2 of the outcome, all the income of the provinces should be deposited in the central treasury. This effort by the Government to centralize revenue collection was welcomed by the Afghan people and by provincial governors and has yielded tangible results.

Work on the new constitution is progressing, and the Government remains engaged in the formulation of the new constitution. Work on the constitution has entered a new phase of public consultation. The process will take up to 50 days to complete with the help of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Constitutional Review Commission. The first office of the Commission has now been opened in Kandahar, and field offices will be opened in Kunduz, Mazar-e-Sharif, Bamyan, Herat, Gardez and Jalalabad. The main purpose of these offices will be to lay the groundwork for public debate on the new Afghan constitution. This will provide the opportunity for every Afghan, regardless of ethnic origin, language, sex, religious sect or political affiliation, to express himself or herself freely and openly and to voice opinions on what will become the constitution of Afghanistan.

Let me express our sincere gratitude to the United Nations, to the United States of America, to all countries members of the International Security Assistance Force – especially the lead nations: the United Kingdom, Turkey, Germany and the Netherlands – and to the anti-terrorist coalition forces for their remarkable performance in assisting Afghans to create a more stable and peaceful environment following the collapse of Al Qaeda and Taliban forces in 2001. We welcome NATO's decision to provide leadership and expanded logistical assistance for the United-Nations-mandated ISAF in Afghanistan starting in August 2003.

Afghanistan supports and welcomes the establishment of the provincial reconstruction teams. That initiative contributes much to the cause of security and to the development of various parts of the country.

Afghanistan endorses and supports the statement prepared by the President of the Security Council and would like to stress its recognition that Afghanistan continues to need considerable political and financial support from the international community and the fact that it urges donors to meet their commitments.

Last but not least, allow me to express on behalf of the Government and the people of Afghanistan our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Germany on the death of German members of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. The cowardly suicide attack which took place on 7 June was carried out by terrorists who are against peace, stability, development and prosperity for the Afghan people. In the face of such a threat, the countries in the region should extend and reinforce their cooperation against terrorism, extremism and fanaticism within the framework of Security Council resolutions, particularly resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1373 (2001). For the same purpose, the forces engaged in combating and containing the spread of terrorism in

Afghanistan and the region should be further strengthened. To that effect the Afghan Government renews its request to the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council to consider the provision of adequate resources, equipment and training for professional personnel for the effective combat against and annihilation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations in and around Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): A number of speakers remain on my list. I propose, with the consent of Council members, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4774 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4774th meeting

Tuesday, 17 June 2003, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-39909 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Kazakhstan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): First let me thank you for convening this Security Council meeting on the situation in Afghanistan. It is a very timely decision to hold a meeting in a format that provides a platform for interested Member States. We all want Afghanistan to be rebuilt, and we should all do our best to provide help to this long-suffering country.

I would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General and Mr. Costa, Executive Director, for their comprehensive briefings on the situation in Afghanistan.

It is commendable that, despite completely destroyed infrastructure and great human losses during the prolonged war, the people of Afghanistan have enthusiastically tackled the task of building a new society. It is quite encouraging to see positive changes and processes in the country in such areas as national reconstruction and state-building.

Work is well under way to convene a Constitutional Loya Jirga, which promises to become the most significant political event in Afghanistan this year. Public service reform is picking up its pace, a system of administration is being put in place, both nationally and locally, and efforts are being made to prepare for judicial sector reform. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission has been actively investigating human rights violations. More than 4 million boys and girls started a new school year.

The Government of Kazakhstan supports the selfless efforts of President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, who leads the successful rehabilitation process in Afghanistan in close cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi.

We find ourselves at the starting point of a long and extremely complex process leading to the restoration of credible peace in Afghanistan. For this reason, it is necessary to further intensify international peacekeeping efforts in the country in order to prevent a relapse into civil war.

We fully share the concerns expressed by the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, regarding the deteriorating security situation due to inter-ethnic and factional clashes, increased activity by elements associated with the Taliban and a drug-based economy. All these factors impede the reconstruction effort, political transformation and re-establishment of the rule of law.

Kazakhstan has always called for an early settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. We continue to firmly believe that the United Nations should play a central role in international efforts to provide assistance to Afghanistan. Now that the process of peaceful settlement has reached the stage of practical actions, the Government of Kazakhstan is working to broaden its participation in political and economic activities of the international community to rebuild Afghan society.

Although the political situation in Afghanistan has become somewhat stable, the country continues to be a source of numerous threats and challenges. In this context, Kazakhstan is especially concerned by the production and trafficking of illicit drugs. Unfortunately, Afghanistan continues to be the main source of drugs bound for international drug markets. Despite the efforts by the international community, opium production in 2002 has returned to former high levels and, as a result, opium transit through the Central Asian countries has increased. It should be noted that the significant scale of illicit drug trafficking constitutes a great threat not only to our region, but to the whole world. We are convinced that, as long as this alarming trend persists, international terrorism will continue to have a source of financial support.

We believe that in order to effectively counter the existing drug threat, it is necessary to apply a comprehensive approach to the solution of this problem, with the United Nations playing a coordinating role. We commend the Government of Afghanistan for taking measures to control poppy cultivation. National drug control strategy provides for alternative economic stimulus packages for farmers and the strengthening of the administration of justice capability in the country. In that context, I would like to stress the importance of convening a drugs control conference in Kabul, which would contribute to the coordination of efforts to combat illicit drug production in Afghanistan.

Kazakhstan commends the contribution by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Drug Control Programme to the efforts to eliminate drugs on a sustainable basis and welcomes the outcome of the International Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, held in Paris on 21 and 22 May 2003.

The Government of Kazakhstan attaches great significance to the signing in December 2002 between the Government of Afghanistan and the six neighbouring countries of the Kabul Declaration of Good Neighbourly Relations, wherein the seven signatories reaffirmed their determination to defeat terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking.

The current discussions give us grounds for concluding that opium production and the existence of a drug-based economy undermine security. Without adequate measures of control, this situation can disrupt the efforts of the international community to end this prolonged crisis in the country and to establish the rule of law in Afghanistan. We should set up joint mechanisms to eliminate channels for drug trafficking from Afghanistan by allocating adequate resources to drug control programmes and projects.

In that regard, I would like to mention the great efforts made in this area by the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Central Asian Cooperation Organization.

Like any other regional State, Kazakhstan is interested in the strengthening of the "security belts" around Afghanistan in order to prevent traffic in illicit drugs in Afghan territory and to prevent precursor chemicals from flowing into Afghanistan.

We also believe that in the existing situation, it is imperative to develop a United Nations programme to combat drug trade in Central Asia on a systematic basis. In that context, the initiative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to create a regional cooperation structure between the Central Asian countries should be supported.

Effective assistance to strengthen the border guard, customs and law enforcement agencies of States located alongside the drug-trafficking routes from Afghanistan and to improve interaction between drug control agencies at the regional level could be an important factor in preventing drug trafficking in Afghanistan.

We agree with the main provisions of the statement of the President of the Security Council on the item under discussion and call on other States to support it.

Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to the efforts of the international community to implement the Bonn Agreement and stands ready to do all it can to contribute to the creation of a new and independent Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Tajikistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Alimov (Tajikistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this special meeting of the Security Council to discuss the situation in Afghanistan and to develop effective measures to counter the global threat of drugs coming from that country.

For a year and a half, Afghan society, following 23 years of war, has been living with the hope of establishing lasting peace and stability, achieving genuine national reconciliation and the long-awaited changes on which Afghan citizens are pinning their future. Tajikistan notes with satisfaction the significant achievements of the Government of Hamid Karzai in implementing the Bonn Agreement, which has become a reliable compass for the normalization of life and the re-establishment of Afghan civil society, which has for many years suffered hardship.

Today's Afghanistan includes 1.5 million refugees and half a million displaced persons who have returned home. It embraces 3 million Afghan children, including girls who now attend school after years of being prohibited from doing so. It includes cinemas and theatres that have reopened their doors to spectators. It is composed of women who are increasingly active participants in the restoration of their country. It involves the rebirth of political life open to all Afghans, regardless of their religious or ethnic affiliations. Finally, it embraces an increasingly strengthened process of State-building in the framework of which complex work is being done on developing the principal body of law, the country's new constitution, and preparations for democratic elections

are under way, which should be a milestone in this new chapter of Afghanistan's history.

We are all witness to how difficult it has been to accomplish that. At the same time, we are not blind to the fact that the country has many unresolved problems, especially in the areas of guaranteeing security and the rule of law. Opponents of the new administration's policies continue to devise plans to disrupt the Afghan peace process. Those forces are counting on the fact that the Government is not yet strong enough for Afghanistan to be able to pursue the course for change. They are devising plans to return Afghan society to the recent dark ages, arbitrary rule and the debasement of the individual.

Such a chain of events would be cause for great disappointment not only for millions of Afghan men and women, who have breathed the air of freedom and live with the hope of swift economic recovery and political reconstruction, but also for the entire international community. It is essentially a test of the ability of the international community not only to provide political and financial support to the Afghan authorities and defend the peace process in Afghanistan but also to follow up on earlier commitments to promote peace and security in that country and stability throughout the region.

To build peace and promote stability and national reconciliation in the country, whose Government is relying on a fragile peace process, is an extremely daunting challenge. Without the support of the international community, it is virtually unrealizable. Tajikistan understands this well and will continue to increase its assistance and support to the efforts of President Hamid Karzai's Administration. At this critical and fateful transition period for Afghanistan, we are calling on the international community not to forget the needs of the Afghan people, bolster the lawful Afghan authorities with renewed vigour to give additional momentum to the peace process in the country.

This is especially important given that elements hostile to the Government of Afghanistan and the international community, including remnants of the Taliban movement, are making efforts to destabilize Afghan society. The activities of armed criminal groups are becoming increasingly brazen. We note with particular concern these terrorist acts in Afghanistan, including against international workers and the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

These destructive acts are being stepped up by those who are controlling and encouraging the development of drug production in Afghanistan, including a network of international organized criminal groups and terrorist organizations. Carrying out anti-terrorist operations in that country has barely destroyed the well-organized Taliban drug trade structure. The main storage facilities, supply points and heroin production laboratories have remained undisturbed. The hellish machinery of heroin is working at full tilt. Profits from the Afghan drug trade in Afghanistan in 2002 alone amounted to $1.2 billion. These illegal revenues are practically equal to the level of international assistance to Afghanistan.

Ten years ago Tajikistan confiscated 38 kilograms of smuggled opium from Afghanistan for the first time, and the first 6 kilograms of Afghan heroin were withdrawn from illegal trade in 1996. Ever since, Tajikistan, which has a 1,500-kilometre border with Afghanistan and was once situated on the great Silk Road, now, given its geopolitical position, is at the crossroads of the great "opium road", along which international criminal drug cartels are exporting heroine across continents.

Tajikistan fully recognizes the seriousness and scale of the drug threat coming from Afghanistan, which is closely linked with international terrorist activities that, in turn, are fuelled by illegal revenues. Drug control is of particular concern to my Government, and the President of the country, Emomali Rakhmonov, views this as a priority objective of State policy. With each year we increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation to that end, especially in the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. We are building on our successful cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

In recent years Tajikistan has became a major and reliable shield against Afghan drugs in transit to Central Asia, Russia, Europe and the United States. Since 1999 the law enforcement agencies of Tajikistan and the Border Group of the Federal Border Service of Russia in the Republic of Tajikistan have removed from illegal circulation more than 25 tons of opiates, including some 14 tons of heroin. The amount of seized

drugs, according to average wholesale prices of West European countries, where the share of Afghan heroine accounts for about 90 per cent of the general supply, is equal to almost $1 billion. We can safely say that thanks to joint operations of the law enforcement agencies of Tajikistan and the Russian Border Service, more than 13 million of the world's citizens have been spared the dangerous encounter with white death.

Today, Tajikistan has seized more than 80 per cent of heroin and opium from illegal trade in the Central Asian region and more than 70 per cent in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. According to United Nations data, our country was ranked fourth in the world in the volume of heroin seized and third in the volume of raw opium seized. Those achievements result not only from the joint efforts of Tajikistan's law-enforcement agencies and of the Russian border service, but also from the efforts of donor States that have provided generous financial and technical assistance, including through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, whose efforts we deeply appreciate.

Despite the fact that the success in combating drug smuggling on the Tajik-Afghan border and in Tajikistan itself has been enhanced several times over, we cannot say that the anti-narcotic security network is 100 per cent effective. In the areas bordering Afghanistan, there are still dozens of laboratories that produce heroin, tons of which are waiting to be sent on the death route to Europe and America. Under the remaining ashes of the inhuman Taliban regime, there still smoulders a fire that poses a danger to international and regional security.

The poignancy of the drug problem in Afghanistan dictates the need to develop an appropriate international strategy that must include specific, appropriate and adequate measures to combat drugs both within and outside Afghanistan. We fully share the assessments that we have heard today in the Security Council, and we believe that a summary of today's discussion could form the basis for developing such a strategy. We believe that, along with continuing to work to establish and strengthen anti-narcotic security networks around Afghanistan, the international community must step up its assistance to the Afghan authorities who are fighting opium poppy cultivation and drug production in Afghanistan.

We also need new, innovative proposals for Afghan farmers who are drawn into opium poppy production. Moreover, targeted support for the customs, border and law-enforcement agencies of the States bordering Afghanistan would be very effective; proof of that can be seen in the success of the international programmes to combat the illicit drug trade that have been implemented in Tajikistan. Another equally important component of such a future strategy would be to create a unified database containing information about people and organizations that have committed crimes related to Afghan drugs. We must devote sufficient attention to the question of where chemical precursors originate and how they enter Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that neutralizing the heroin beast can be accomplished only if there is a united coalition of all the neighbouring countries, supported by the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and Japan, which, with the coordinating role of the United Nations, can implement an international strategy to combat the illicit trafficking of Afghan narcotics. In Tajikistan, we are convinced that only collective resistance to the global drug danger emanating from Afghanistan will give that country an opportunity to rid itself once and for all of the heroin legacy left by the Taliban, to develop national harmony and stability, and to make its contribution to the cause of supporting peace and security in the region.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, I should like to join previous speakers in expressing our appreciation to you, Sir, for having convened this meeting, and also to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and to Director-General Costa for their briefings this morning.

More than a year and a half after the collapse of the Taliban, Afghanistan still languishes in a strange limbo between war and peace. Although the ouster of the Taliban and of Al Qaeda from power and the establishment of the Interim Authority — as well as its commendable and important achievements — have been encouraging and a source of relief for the Afghans, for the region and for the international

community as a whole, the country has yet to find itself on an irreversible path towards stability and normalcy. The authority of the central Government has yet to spread throughout Afghanistan. A lack of security across the country — including in the capital — is still an underlying problem. The recent suicide bomb attack on German troops in Kabul, which regrettably killed four soldiers, was only the latest in a series. Continuing security problems are especially damaging because the drafting and approval of a new constitution and the holding of general elections, laid out by the Bonn Agreement, should be completed by next June. Such problems have also discouraged domestic and foreign investment, thus slowing down the country's economic regeneration.

The effect of persistent insecurity, coupled with a lack of sufficient funds for reconstruction, has created a negative trend in Afghanistan. To reverse that trend, a sharp increase in international assistance is needed, especially with regard to empowering the new Afghan army, which still numbers only about 4,000 to 5,000 troops stationed mostly around Kabul — far short of the 70,000 or more projected. Consequently, the dependence of the central Government on local commanders to keep order has thus far come at the expense of central authority and lies at the root of a number of problems.

The Afghan people and their neighbours — who incurred enormous losses for more than two decades as a result of lawlessness and instability in Afghanistan — expect the international community not to shrink from its commitments to the Afghans. To do otherwise would amount to abandoning Afghanistan to chaos, leaving the country wide open for the Taliban and Osama bin Laden to move back in and to turn it once again into a base for their terrorist operations.

Already, evidence of such a surge of activity in Afghanistan is abundant: the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Hekmatyar's group have reorganized. In the past two weeks, they have carried out 20 operations against the security forces and people loyal to the Government, using more lethal and sophisticated devices and explosives. While they are more concentrated in the eastern provinces, they are increasingly targeting areas in central Afghanistan. Their increasingly centralized and visible leadership — including previous as well as new, emerging leaders — is more outspoken and active in talking to the media, inciting the Afghans to oppose the central Government. And the list goes on.

My country, as one of Afghanistan's neighbours, is particularly concerned about the continued rise in opium production in Afghanistan. Despite the commendable efforts of President Karzai and his Administration, as well as those of the United Nations system, Afghanistan continues to be the main centre of illicit opium production in the world, and, as the Secretary-General asserted in his latest report (S/2003/333), poppy cultivation and the production and trafficking in drugs remain major national and international concerns.

Undoubtedly, insecurity and drug trafficking in Afghanistan are mutually reinforcing, and both contribute in turn to terrorism and other forms of transnational crime. Across the globe, the lines between international organized crime and global terrorism have become impossibly blurred, and the links between them have grown in the past decade. The recognition of this reality should compel Governments to begin revamping their strategy for the war on both terrorism and drug trafficking.

We support the idea of promoting, under United Nations auspices, a comprehensive anti-drug strategy based on close cooperation between the parties concerned and the Afghan Transitional Administration. Meanwhile, we believe that such a comprehensive strategy should be all-encompassing, bringing all actors and interested parties — including civil society and Governments — from source, transit and destination countries together. It should also aim at addressing all aspects of the problem, including opium cultivation, drug processing, trafficking and abuse.

The problem resides as much on the supply side as on the demand side. Insecurity in Afghanistan, which I referred to earlier, and the collapse of the economic infrastructure in that country, giving rise to widespread unemployment and lack of economic activities, are among the main problems that should be addressed on the supply side. Thus, Afghan reconstruction should get effectively under way. Crop substitution requires a credit system. Afghan drug law enforcement should be trained, equipped and financed. These are some of the measures that are required on the supply side. Obviously, the Afghan Administration, as a newly constituted entity, simply cannot single-handedly carry out all these measures and thus requires wide-ranging assistance.

Combating drug trafficking requires assisting the transit countries so as to enable them to build the necessary capacity to intercept narcotic shipments. They need assistance in a variety of areas, such as information and intelligence sharing, and new detecting and communication methods and technologies. And there should be no doubt that addressing the problem at the source and in transit countries is much cheaper for the destination countries.

However, it is obvious that, without successful efforts on the demand side with a view to considerably reducing demand, the fight against traffickers cannot come to fruition. As long as the prospect of huge windfalls persists, it will continue to be very difficult to put an end to the deadly business of drug trafficking. Undoubtedly, the possible decrease in supply as a result of actions in the source and transit countries leads only to an increase in the price of drugs, thus creating stronger motivation for growers and traffickers.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a neighbour of Afghanistan, is the primary transit route for narcotics to the West and, at the same time, has itself become a destination country. Therefore, we have always attached paramount importance to fighting drug trafficking and urged the international community to join hands in this endeavour. As recognized in the latest report of the Secretary-General, Iran addresses the problem at the source by providing resources for labour-intensive public works and infrastructure projects in Afghanistan. Moreover, we have provided assistance to the Afghan Government in a variety of ways, including investing in crop substitution, training Afghan law enforcement officers in Iran, training and equipping Afghan law enforcement offices in five Afghan provinces, and building 25 sentry posts for the Afghan Government. According to our estimates, the total value of Iran's contribution to various projects for the reconstruction of Afghanistan exceeded $68 million as of March 2003.

My country has paid a very heavy human and material toll in its fight against drug trafficking. As a result, Iran has always had by far the largest number of overall global drug seizures. And as Iran is a destination country, its agencies are implementing various initiatives to tackle drug abuse. The international community can always count on our readiness to effectively contribute to the global combat against traffic in narcotics.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Greece. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia; the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey; as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Iceland, declare that they align themselves with this statement.

Despite the remarkable progress that has been achieved in Afghanistan since the Bonn Agreement, significant challenges remain. The European Union commends the efforts made so far by President Karzai's Government to implement the Agreement and stands firm in its commitment to assist the Afghan Administration to this end. We also support the United Nations, and in particular Mr. Brahimi, in their important tasks in that country. In this respect, there is also a special role for the Special Representative of the EU in Afghanistan, Francesc Vendrell.

Nevertheless, a lot remains to be done to ensure viable and lasting peace and security. Post-conflict resolution always represents a tremendous challenge, and even more so in Afghanistan, which is one of the poorest countries in the world. It has been through over 20 years of war, strife and natural disaster. It is essential that the international community fully participate in the economic and institutional reconstruction of the country and fully support the political process that underlies the reconstruction. The signing of the Kabul Declaration On Good-neighbourly Relations in December last year also emphasized the importance of peaceful and constructive regional cooperation.

The lack of security continues to be an issue of grave concern. We deplore the loss of lives, such as that suffered recently by two European countries, Spain and Germany, in the conduct of the activities of their troops under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

As a contribution to this vital sector, many EU member States play a key role in the deployment of ISAF, the bulk of which is comprised of troops from the EU countries and which has significantly improved

the security situation in and around Kabul. European Union member States are also actively participating in efforts to reform the Afghan security sector through the strengthening of the Afghan national army and police, including anti-narcotic units and border police, as well as judicial training and reform. Security sector reform, including the restructuring of the Ministries of Defence and Interior and the intelligence agencies, is of the utmost importance for the viability of the forthcoming disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, which is to begin in July 2003.

Another important challenge is making newly and already established institutions work in an efficient, transparent and accountable manner and to expand their influence to the provinces. The European Union has a long-term commitment to assist in the creation of a viable Afghan State based on democracy, the rule of law and universal standards of human rights, including women's rights. To this end, the European Union underlines its support for the work of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

In this regard, it is noted that the future viability of the Afghan State will to a large degree depend on its Government's being broad-based and fully representative and recognized as such by a majority of the Afghan people. The impending Constitutional Loya Jirga process, which will lead to a new constitution being adopted in October, and the national elections to be held at the latest in June 2004, will be of fundamental importance to the political future of Afghanistan. The European Union stresses the importance it attaches to the preparations for the new Afghan constitution and the holding of full and democratic elections in Afghanistan, as set out in the Bonn Agreement. This new Afghan Constitution should be the cornerstone for the development of such a democratic Afghan society. The European Union strongly supports the role of the United Nations in the preparations for the elections and underlines that it is important that the process leading towards these elections be sustained.

The European Union is fully committed to delivering a substantial contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, having been one of the key donors from the very beginning of the process. The total EU commitment for 2002 — that of member States plus the Commission — was about 850 million euros. To date, 800 million euros have been disbursed. European Union pledges for 2002-2006 are $2.25 billion, or approximately 45 per cent of the total pledges made at the January 2002 donor conference in Tokyo. The EU has funded approximately one third of the current budget expenses of the Afghan Government, thereby directly supporting the budget for teachers, nurses, police, administrators and Government infrastructure.

European Union Member States have taken leading roles in crucial areas of administrative and technical assistance. The European Commission has also provided technical recovery and reconstruction assistance, with emphasis on public sector reform and budgetary support, rural development and food security, rebuilding infrastructure, in particular the Kabul-Jalalabad-Torkham road and basic health care.

The European Union notes the serious lack of funds for the budget and urges donors to consider ways of filling the gap, including delivery in a timely manner of pledges made in Tokyo. The Union encourages the allocation of development aid in a way that strengthens the role of the central government and ensures that a visible peace dividend reaches the entire Afghan population as soon as possible.

In addition to its leading role in the reconstruction effort, the European Union is a major source of humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan. European Union contributions through 2002 total $650 million and span programmes from food aid — through the World Food Programme, to emergency health, water and sanitation services — through the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

Besides the immediate tasks of stabilization and reconstruction, one of the key aims of European Union assistance to Afghanistan is to improve availability and access to food and to promote alternatives to poppy production. The European Union strongly believes that drug production and trafficking undermine development efforts, destabilize political systems, engender corruption, fuel organized crime and might even finance terrorist activities. The smuggling of opiates and cannabis undermines the economic and social stability of countries and jeopardizes peace and security in the region as a whole.

We are committed to coordinating our assistance with the United Kingdom, which is leading international counter-narcotics efforts to support the Government of Afghanistan in eliminating the

cultivation, processing and trafficking of opiates. We also recognize that international efforts to tackle the drug problem involve both development concerns and priorities, demand reduction and the strengthening of law enforcement capabilities. We should also focus on the drug routes, since the drug fight must be geographically comprehensive and address simultaneously the problems of production, trafficking and consumption at all points on the routes along which drugs move from producers to consumers.

We stress the need for intensified cooperation with the Government of Afghanistan in implementing the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy. We should also assist in transforming Afghanistan's economy into a normally functioning one, away from drugs. Mainstreaming of the drug fight into coherent and sustainable development policies in producing and trafficking countries should be a priority. Drugs must be dealt with as part of a broader set of development and human welfare issues, which should include both poverty reduction and public health considerations.

Lastly, the international community needs to redouble its efforts to assist the Afghan Government in carrying out its commitment to uphold international law and offer its long-suffering people a better future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Japan.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): Mr. President, thank you for convening this meeting focusing on the security situation and drug control issues in Afghanistan.

Despite the measures taken by both the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to eradicate the poppy crops, it is anticipated that, again in 2003, Afghanistan will be the world's largest opium producer. This means that a large amount of drugs will be illicitly exported from Afghanistan, resulting in many criminal actions and a huge number of victims in various parts of the world. In addition, it means that the restoration of public security and the consolidation of peace in Afghanistan will be jeopardized. Poppy cultivation and the drug business enrich provincial warlords and provide them with bases from which to challenge the authority of the central Government. This is a very grave problem. We need to have effective counter-narcotics measures that will contribute to the establishment of the authority of the central Government by undermining the financial foundation of the warlords, thereby contributing to the improvement of security and the consolidation of peace.

In this regard, I would like to make the following points. First, we strongly support the 10-year National Drug Control Strategy set out by the Government of Afghanistan. We also welcome the initiative of the United Kingdom, as the lead nation in this effort. Successful drug control depends not only on effective programmes for growers and on capacity-building for law enforcement, but also on the reduction of poverty, because poverty can often lead to drug problems. In order to improve the overall economic situation of the country, especially in rural areas, which we believe will help to enable farmers to overcome their dependence on poppy cultivation, Japan, for its part, is steadily implementing a Comprehensive Regional Development Plan — the so-called Ogata Initiative. Under this plan, projects are being carried out in such spheres as income generation, medical care, sanitation and capacity-building for education and labour-intensive infrastructure rehabilitation.

Secondly, in addition to promoting poppy eradication and combating the drug trade within Afghanistan, it is also necessary to address the problems from a regional perspective. The drugs produced in Afghanistan are illicitly exported by land to markets abroad. It is, therefore, essential for the neighbouring States to effectively control their borders and cut off the trade route within their territory. We commend the various initiatives and measures taken in this regard by neighbouring States, such as Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan. Japan has supported and contributed to the activities of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in these countries.

Thirdly, the control of all drugs must be strengthened globally. Unless the supply and demand for drugs is controlled worldwide, it will be impossible to control the trafficking of drugs. What is required, therefore, are more thorough exchanges of information among customs authorities and greater cooperation among law enforcement and investigative agencies.

Fourthly, as I mentioned at the outset, drugs affect public security; it stands to reason, then, that measures to enhance public security will also lead to effective counter-narcotics measures. In this sense, success in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, as well as the

establishment of a credible Afghan national army and police force, will enhance the effectiveness of drug control efforts.

In this context, I wish to underscore the importance of support for the DDR process, which President Karzai announced will start on 22 June. It is encouraging that he has also committed himself to completing the disarmament and demobilization process by the time the election is held in June of next year. Japan and the United Nations are taking the lead in this process and are making great efforts to ensure its success. Among the challenges we are facing are: ensuring the neutrality of the mobile disarmament unit; establishing an international verification system; ensuring public security; reforming the Ministry of Defence; and strengthening the reintegration project. We highly appreciate the cooperation of the countries that have sent, or are ready to send, provisional reconstruction teams to the provinces. We urge the international community to extend full cooperation to the DDR process, which is indispensable for the improvement of the overall public security situation throughout the country, for the consolidation of the peace process and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan.

As other new, urgent issues come up in other areas, such as Iraq and the Middle East, there is concern over the tendency for the international community's attention to be distracted from Afghanistan. But we should be aware that failure to secure the peace in that country could seriously affect the peace process in other areas, as well. Now, as the peace process in Afghanistan approaches an extremely delicate stage, with the forthcoming Constitutional Loya Jirga and the election next year, the public security situation remains very precarious. Our support for the peace process must not consist simply of gestures made at those times when the situation in Afghanistan is the focus of world attention. We must honour the commitments we have made until a free, democratic and peaceful Afghanistan is achieved.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): I would like, first of all, to congratulate you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of June. Let me also express our sincere compliments to your predecessor, Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan, for his excellent leadership of the Council during the month of May.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this public debate. My delegation expresses its gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Mr. Antonio Maria Costa, for their comprehensive, substantive and timely reports on the issue. I reiterate the full readiness of my Government to extend to them all possible support and assistance in their complicated work.

The normalization of the situation in Afghanistan and Afghanistan's reintegration into the community of nations as a united, sovereign, stable, predictable and peaceful State living in harmony with its neighbours are essential prerequisites for regional stability and security. Ukraine welcomes the progress made since the Bonn Agreement and the commitment of the Afghan Transitional Administration to set clear priorities for the recovery and reconstruction of the country and to prepare for holding general elections in mid-2004. We also pledge our support for President Karzai's efforts aimed at promoting national reconciliation, establishing new army and law enforcement structures and rehabilitating the national economy.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned over the difficulties still confronting the country, particularly in the field of internal security. Positive developments such as the public consultations in the constitution-making process, the latest decision by the National Security Council to remit all customs receipts to the central Government, progress towards the national census and judicial and administrative reforms could be undermined by the lack of security and by the continued unwillingness of local chiefs to disarm and to submit to the central Government.

Ukraine is seriously concerned by the escalation of subversive and terrorist activities and strongly condemns all acts of violence and intimidation directed against United Nations and humanitarian personnel. I extend our sincere sympathy for those killed in the attacks and express our condolences to the bereaved families.

The Afghan Transitional Administration, with the support of the United Nations, should take urgent measures to improve the security situation, which remains the only condition for allowing the re-establishment of the rule of law, ensuring the protection of human rights, promoting reconstruction efforts and facilitating the success of the complex political processes. In that regard, in our view, special priority should also be given to another important part of security sector reform: the implementation of the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) announced by President Karzai, which is expected to begin in the coming weeks. We commend the leading role of the United Nations, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada in providing necessary contributions for the development and implementation of the DDR programmes.

One of the most alarming factors creating insecurity and dangerous challenges to the institution-building efforts and to the rule of law in Afghanistan is the narcotics threat. Moreover, organized crime and illicit trafficking in and abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances are becoming the most serious threats to economic prosperity and political stability in many countries of the world. The link between narcotic drug trafficking and other serious phenomena such as terrorism, money-laundering and smuggling should not be ignored.

It is evident that no individual State can address those challenges alone. They can be addressed only through concerted, coordinated and effective action by the international community as a whole. The further strengthening of the role of the United Nations, as a powerful instrument in developing international cooperation to combat narcotic drug threats, is extremely important and necessary.

Ukraine supports full implementation of the Afghan national drug strategy and the Paris Pact proposed by the United Nations during the conference on drug routes from Afghanistan held at the initiative of the French. Undoubtedly, the success of the Afghan Administration in combating drugs is dependent on the success of the peace process as a whole. The only way to remove the drug dependence of drug crop farmers is by providing them with alternative livelihoods, with skills to engage in other economic activities and with markets where they can sell their output.

In that connection, Ukraine supports proposals to develop, under the aegis of the United Nations, an international strategy of complex counteraction against narcotic drugs originating in Afghanistan.

Security, good governance and reconstruction are the most critical problems confronting Afghanistan. The Government of Ukraine expresses its readiness for efficient collaboration with the United Nations, as well as at the bilateral level, with the Transitional Administration, to achieve the goals outlined by the Bonn Agreement, the Security Council and United Nations bodies and agencies.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of India. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Gopinathan (India): We extend our warm felicitations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. The Security Council and the general membership of the United Nations will benefit greatly from your adroit stewardship of the Council at a time when complex and sensitive issues remain on the Council's agenda.

Most appropriately, you have chosen to hold a public debate on the situation in Afghanistan as the highlight of your presidency. Despite the scale and complexity of diverse problems it faces, Afghanistan, under the leadership of President Hamid Karzai, has made impressive progress in addressing the tasks of nation-building, political reconciliation and reconstruction of the economy. It is, however, critical that the United Nations remain fully engaged in monitoring and supporting developments in this vital part of the world.

We understand that while the focus of deliberations today is on the problem of drugs in Afghanistan, the debate has been left open to a consideration of some of the other pressing issues involving the country.

Let me first address the issue of drugs in Afghanistan. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has, in its report of February 2003 entitled "The opium economy in Afghanistan: an international problem", drawn attention to the serious situation that has been brought about by a rampant increase in drug cultivation and the threat it represents

to Afghanistan and the international community. Years of instability, internal strife, mismanagement by the Taliban and complicity within certain quarters of the country and outside have contributed to the current situation whereby Afghanistan has emerged as the world's largest producer of illicit opium, accounting for almost three quarters of global opium production. The report highlights that over the last two decades, Afghanistan's opium production has increased more than 15-fold, with production in 2002 at 3,400 tons.

As the report indicates, Afghanistan's opium economy is not a country-wide phenomenon, but is limited to a few provinces that have continued to defy the opium ban issued by President Karzai in January 2002. Almost 80 per cent of all opium production in Afghanistan is confined to provinces along the southern and south-eastern borders of Afghanistan. This small area is the origin of almost three quarters of the heroin sold in Europe and virtually all of the heroin in the Russian Federation.

Drugs account for as much as 18 per cent of Afghanistan's gross domestic product. The UNODC report has sought to emphasize that the problem of drugs in Afghanistan can be traced to its socio-economic roots. The phenomenon needs to be tackled at a multifaceted level, involving comprehensive action providing for accelerated development in the provinces concerned, increasing literacy and employment opportunities and alternative crop cultivation options for opium farms. However, none of those medium- to long-term solutions can be achieved without facilitating a basic environment of security and stability.

Discussions at the Paris Conference on drug routes from Central Asia to Europe, held from 21 to 23 May 2003, highlighted the nexus between drug trafficking and financing of terrorism, and reinforced the requirement for an urgent, swift and coordinated response to the problem. That this form of narco-terrorism has often been State-sponsored or assisted by unrestrained agents of State authority have not made it any easier to control.

India welcomes the efforts made by President Hamid Karzai and the Afghan Transitional Administration to implement the decrees prohibiting the cultivation, production and processing of opium, including illicit drug-trafficking and abuse. This is a qualitative step forward from the Taliban regime that banned production with the intention of inflating prices. To that end, the Taliban not only failed to eliminate the large accumulated stockpiles of opium and heroin under its control, but also allowed de facto trade in narcotics to continue. President Karzai has indicated his Government's seriousness in addressing this issue. His decision has to be supported through the will of the international community.

India welcomes the significant contribution by UNODC and the United Nations Drug Control Programme, as well as individual States, to counter the threat of drugs in Afghanistan. The Joint Statement issued at the conclusion of the sixth meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Afghanistan, on 28 March 2003, expressed concern over the increased production of narcotic drugs in Afghanistan and their illegal trafficking, and emphasized the need for the development of a comprehensive strategy, with an appropriate key United Nations role in the process. India recognizes that most of these projects are long-term, but vital in the elimination of drugs on a sustainable basis.

In the statement on Afghanistan made in the General Assembly on 6 December 2002, India expressed deep concern over reports of an increase in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the fact that the momentum for putting in place an anti-narcotics strategy had faltered. We emphasized the role of the international community in supporting Afghanistan in its drive to combat drug cultivation and trade and the efforts required to extend development plans to different parts of the country.

In India's view, given the seriousness of the situation — its dimensions and implications within and outside Afghanistan — there is a pressing need to tackle the issue on an immediate basis to supplement other long-term programmes under implementation or consideration. Some essential components in such a strategy could include the allocation of more resources for the affected parts of the country to bolster ongoing security efforts; enhancement of the capacity of the Afghan Government to enforce its ban on opium cultivation, production and trafficking; identification and elimination of the chain of trans-border criminals and their supporters involved in the supply and sale of drugs, drug-related money laundering, arms supply, terrorism and illegal immigration; greater cooperation among the countries concerned on information-sharing, legal and judicial matters, including the extradition of

drug offenders wanted in other countries and interdiction efforts; and a strong crackdown on the warlords concerned and external actors involved in the facilitation of this illegal trade.

India has fully supported international efforts aimed at the reconstruction and emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, strong, prosperous, united and independent nation. We have noted carefully the progress achieved in the implementation of the provisions of the Bonn Agreement and the coordination of various international efforts aimed at rehabilitation and reconstruction. The agreement reached in May 2003 to enable the Afghan Administration to centralize revenue collection is an important step towards the development of an independent resource base and should be adequately supported by the parties concerned. India fully supports the broad-based Government led by President Hamid Karzai and appreciates his committed efforts at promoting national reconciliation.

It is towards this end that India has extended an assistance package amounting to over $170 million to Afghanistan. This includes a recent commitment of $70 million to upgrade and reconstruct a key arterial road linking Delaram in Afghanistan to port facilities in Iran. We have also trained about 500 Afghan nationals in disciplines ranging from law enforcement, journalism and civil aviation to the judiciary, diplomacy and agriculture. Unfortunately, transit-related difficulties prevented the supply of India's gift of a million tons of wheat to Afghanistan. However, a portion of the wheat was converted into high-protein biscuits for the children's school feeding programme and is understood to be sufficient to meet the requirements of one million Afghan schoolchildren for a period of six months. We intend to build further on this.

Security remains the most serious challenge to the process of peace-building and economic reconstruction in Afghanistan. Reports of increasing instability in Afghanistan due to the deteriorating security situation need to be addressed firmly and resolutely by the international community before matters run out of control. We extend our sincere condolences to the Government and people of Germany for the loss of 4 soldiers during the recent terrorist attack in Kabul. This incident, taken in conjunction with several other recent security-related developments, such as the killing of the employee of the International Committee of the Red Cross in March this year, highlights the increasing need for the international community to address the threats to regional peace and stability emanating from terrorist activity in the region.

This escalation can be directly attributed to the increasingly emboldened subversive and terrorist activity by elements hostile to the Afghan Government, including Taliban remnants, Al Qaeda and their accomplices, and their efforts to regroup with supporters from outside. Ambassador Brahimi, in his last briefing to the Council, on 6 May, expressed concern over reports of hostile elements crossing into Afghanistan over its eastern and southern borders. More recent incidents have shown that infiltrations by terrorist and extremist groups from those areas into Afghanistan have targeted international aid workers and coalition forces in a clear design to sabotage efforts aimed at national reconciliation through political and economic processes. Serious international efforts would need to be directed against that threat.

Mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan constitute crucial elements in the search for the return of peace and stability to that country. It is therefore vital that signatory States adhere to their commitments outlined under the Kabul Declaration on Good-neighbourly Relations signed on 22 December 2002. One way to ensure this would be to entrust the Secretary-General with the role of monitoring adherence by concerned States to the Declaration. The Afghan Government could also provide valuable information towards any monitoring mechanism set up in that regard.

Another measure to facilitate a more secure environment in Afghanistan would be to proceed rapidly forward on the development of indigenous security structures as a guarantee towards the long-term unity and stability of the country. That process needs to be carried out in a calibrated manner without weakening current resources and strength. At the same time, disarmament and demobilization processes should continue forward.

We are at a delicate crossroads in the process of forming a stable and secure Afghanistan. It is therefore vital that the international community continue to engage with the same intensity in the task of rehabilitating Afghanistan from the dark ages under the Taliban yoke to the light of a new century under a

stable, democratic order. Referring to the responsibilities of the international community in this regard, the Minister for External Affairs of India stated recently that "the forces of terror, the forces of darkness, the forces of obscurantism and extremism will not be allowed to cast their long shadows over the future of the people" of Afghanistan. For this, the international community needs to persevere with commitment, solidarity and generosity.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. McIvor (New Zealand): We would first like to thank the Council for providing this opportunity to discuss a peace and security issue of major international importance. New Zealand places a high priority on contributing to efforts by the international community to assist in the restoration of Afghanistan, to establish security and to rebuild society. We see the role of the United Nations, through the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), as very important in this process.

We received two briefings this morning, on the overall situation in Afghanistan and on the challenges posed by drug cultivation and trafficking. Mr. Costa's excellent briefing was a stark reminder of the inter-relationships among economic, political and security factors contributing to ongoing instability. Addressing the drug economy is a necessary first step in countering a range of illegal activities. The links among drugs, the authority of the central Government, its ability to implement key milestones in the Bonn Agreement and broader security continue to present major challenges. We are very appreciative of the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and those Member States making significant contributions to drug eradication efforts in Afghanistan.

Turning to the situation in Afghanistan as a whole, it has been heartening to see the achievements of the transitional Government since last year. The establishment of a Constitutional Commission and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, the return to school of almost 6 million children and the absorption of 1.7 million refugees back into communities are all positive developments. We encourage further progress on the key milestones contained in the Bonn Agreement, particularly in the lead-up to national elections scheduled for next year.

We have been concerned at the recent attacks on the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Kabul. They reinforce the importance of strengthening national security institutions and providing support to the ISAF and Operation Enduring Freedom.

In addition to providing personnel to ISAF and supporting Operation Enduring Freedom since late 2001, the New Zealand Government recently announced a further contribution to the reconstruction of Afghanistan. New Zealand will contribute to one of the provincial reconstruction teams that are working with the Afghan provisional Government to expand its influence outside Kabul, enhance the security environment, promote the reconstruction effort, and monitor and assess civil, political and military reform efforts through community engagement. If it proves to be within our capability, that contribution will extend to leading a provincial reconstruction team. This will be complemented by the deployment of New Zealand Defence Force personnel to work with a British team providing command and leadership training to the Afghan national army in Kabul.

New Zealand is very aware of the need to achieve tangible improvements in the quality of life of Afghan people, while also making longer-term investments in building capacity, through reconstruction and development activities. These considerations have informed our contribution to humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, there remains a vital need for the international community to reassure Afghanistan's Government and people that we intend to remain engaged in security and humanitarian assistance efforts to restore their country.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Colombia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Giraldo (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June.

The delegation of Colombia expresses its solidarity with the Afghan people, victims of the endemic violence and religious extremism that have

undermined their basic rights. The Colombian people too has endured violence generated by illegal armed and violent groups that persist in sowing terror and death in order to cause anarchy and prevent the economic and social development to which all the peoples of the world are entitled.

Colombia, which has been waging a relentless war against illicit drugs and terrorism, notes with particular concern that opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan reached such high levels in 2002. We know first-hand the arduous task facing the Afghan authorities in eradicating these illicit crops, since for many years we have made major efforts and invested hundreds of millions of dollars in eradicating these crops from our country. In 2002, we succeeded in reversing the upward trend in these crops, which for the first time in history dropped by 30 per cent.

The international community recognizes the global problem of drugs and related crime as one of the most serious scourges on humanity today and as an immense challenge. Along with the public health problem that is caused by the consumption of illicit drugs, with its tragic consequences for the family and society, there is also the huge danger that this problem poses to international security. Illicit drugs, money-laundering and the illicit trafficking in arms are the effective tripod of international crime. Actions to confront this that have been taken by countries most affected have proved inadequate when the entire international community does not commit itself to destroying every one of these elements through international cooperation.

The global problems of drugs and terrorism are increasingly inter-linked, since terrorist groups not only avail themselves of the copious resources generated by the growing demand for drugs, but also participate directly in that perverse business. What has happened in recent years in Afghanistan demonstrates that. In fact, extremist groups have been strengthened financially by the proceeds of the alarming expansion of illicit cultivation in that country and the resulting opium trafficking, mainly to Europe.

For that reason, we welcome the fact that today, the Security Council will adopt a presidential statement in which the links between these two problems are acknowledged and the danger that these activities represent for Afghanistan, its neighbours and the entire world is highlighted. We also welcome the appeal made to neighbouring countries and the international community to intensify their cooperation with regard to security and control of trafficking in drugs, their precursors and related crimes such as money-laundering. We acknowledge the work of the countries that assisted Afghanistan in its struggle against drug trafficking, and we stress the need to continue and intensify that work. We join in the call to reduce the world-wide consumption of these substances and to offer Afghan farmers alternative development programmes with markets open to their products.

The General Assembly and the Security Council itself have repeatedly acknowledged the links between international terrorism and drug trafficking. In the fight against those serious phenomena, the international community must resolutely shoulder its commitment, in conformity with the principle of shared responsibility. The global drug problem has transcended the public health and police spheres, having become a matter of national security owing to its grave impact on the social, economic and political stability of nations.

As a representative of a nation that has been a victim of the perverse alliance between terrorism and trafficking in illicit drugs, I should like to deliver to the Council — which, I recognize, is much wiser than my words — a warning derived from experience. Terrorists do not share our values. For them, trafficking in illicit drugs is only an effective means of financing their actions. Therefore, we cannot yield in our commitment to containing all possible sources of terrorist financing through, inter alia, the strengthening of our legislative systems, effective banking controls and adequate exchange of information at the international level.

In Colombia, the deadly alliance between terrorism and trafficking in illicit drugs has become obvious. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) — a guerrilla group that says it fights, for political causes — initially confronted illicit-drug trafficking organizations and soon proceeded to coexist with them and to protect their crops and laboratories in exchange for payment in cash or in kind — generally weapons. Later, it became involved in illicit cultivation, even going so far as to process coca leaves in order to produce basic paste. Currently, FARC is refining the paste and shipping cocaine to consumer destinations.

So we must bear in mind that terrorists' association with and participation in illicit drug trafficking are virtually inevitable, will increase with time and will make the task of strangling terrorism at its economic sources even more difficult.

All of the forms and manifestations of terrorism are equally dangerous to international peace and security. All terrorists share related objectives and means. They are opposed to democracy, human rights, tolerance, the peaceful settlement of disputes and freedom of thought and expression, among other intangible values. That is why their objectives are very similar throughout the world, and that is why their enemies are all of us who agree on the absolute need to defend those values.

As the United Nations tackled the terrorism of Al Qaeda with swiftness and resolve, it now has the obligation to take up the fight — for which humanity will be grateful — against all of terrorism's forms and manifestations, which constitute grave threats to international peace and security. Therefore, my delegation reaffirms Colombia's commitment to the direct struggle against terrorism and welcomes any initiative that will help to eradicate that scourge. In that connection, we note with great interest the initiative recently presented in this Chamber by the President of the Government of Spain — a proposal that could bring about the updating of resolution 1373 (2001) with a view to broadening the scope of its provisions and thus tightening even further the net that the international community is stretching around all those who have made violence and terror a way of life.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Today, the international spotlight is not on Afghanistan. However, it is of crucial importance that we not lose focus on Afghanistan. Remarkable progress has been achieved since the Bonn Agreement, but there is still much to do before we can ensure viable and lasting peace and security.

Norway believes that the United Nations should be a key actor in the reconstruction process in post-conflict environments. We therefore fully support the integrated approach of the United Nations in Afghanistan. In effect, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has succeeded in taking an appropriate assisting role — as opposed to a leadership role — in the development process. We also stand fully behind the work of Mr. Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, and are very pleased to note the excellent relations that have grown out of the cooperation between the Afghan Transitional Administration and the Special Representative.

Norway is deeply concerned about the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan. The difficult security situation — which led to the tragic death of four German members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), to the assassination of a staff member of the International Committee of the Red Cross and to several recent attacks on civilian aid workers — is undermining the possibility of providing humanitarian assistance throughout the country. ISAF is crucial in maintaining stability and security in the Kabul area. Norway will continue to participate both in that operation and in Operation Enduring Freedom.

We are convinced that, in the long run, successful implementation of an Afghan-led security sector reform is essential in order to ensure positive political and economic development in Afghanistan with the assistance of the international community. We have noted with interest the ongoing discussions on establishing provincial reconstruction teams in order to increase security in Afghanistan. The concerns raised regarding a confusion of roles between those teams and civilian aid workers need to closely looked at. The expanding drug economy is also a threat to peace and stability, not only in Afghanistan, but also in the region as a whole.

Narcotics are rightly described as a cancer, and excising that cancer is vital for our societies. Norway appreciates that President Hamid Karzai is firmly committed to carrying out this fight in Afghanistan in cooperation with the international community. It is a fight that requires a multidimensional approach and the United Kingdom's efforts as the lead nation of donors involved in counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan are highly commendable.

The Bonn Agreement spells out an ambitious timetable for the adoption of a new constitution that should safeguard the interests of all Afghan women and men. In this regard, it is vital that the Afghan people actively take part in an open consultation process as

soon as possible. Norway supports this process through the Constitutional Commission and by supporting non-governmental organizations that facilitate consultations with the population on grass-roots levels.

Afghans have a right to choose their own leaders. This is clearly recognized in the Bonn Agreement. A prerequisite for free and fair elections is a security situation in which people feel free to express their views without fear of intimidation or persecution. The United Nations agreement to play a key role in preparing the elections is welcome and needed.

Significant progress in clarifying relations between the central Government and the provinces has been achieved lately, especially as regards customs and tax revenue. We strongly support the Afghan Transitional Administration in its efforts to control domestic revenue collection.

Afghanistan is one of the major recipients of Norwegian development assistance. Norway has pledged $53 million in assistance to Afghanistan in 2003. So far, about 80 per cent has been disbursed or committed. Norway has a long-term perspective on its commitment to Afghanistan.

It is essential that the international community honour the pledges made at the Afghanistan Development Forum in March this year and disburse funding fully and as quickly as possible. Norway is a strong supporter of joint financing mechanisms, such as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). In order to strengthen the Afghan Transitional Administration, it is important that the large donors also support the Afghan national budget through the ARTF.

Norway is very pleased that the Afghan authorities have taken the leadership in donor coordination through the establishment of the Consultative Group mechanism. At the same time, we emphasize the continued need for flexible and independent humanitarian action.

There is a real risk that the Bonn process will stall if security is not extended to the provinces. Peace, stability and economic development can be achieved only through a prolonged commitment from the international community in Afghanistan. Security is the most essential condition for positive development.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Uzbekistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): Recent events have provided irrefutable proof of the link between international terrorism and the drug trade that fuels it. The activities of the narco-mafia are closely connected to arms smuggling, trafficking in humans and money-laundering, all of which not only represent an economic and social threat, but are also a direct challenge to the security of States.

The issue of illicit drug trafficking is of concern to all — both to countries on drug-supply routes and to those where the drugs are primarily consumed. We have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that transit through Central Asian countries is growing day by day and that this increases drug abuse not only in Central Asia, but also far beyond it.

With respect to drug transit through the territories of the countries of Central Asia, we must recognize the incontrovertible connection of this scourge to the problem of opiate culture and production in neighbouring Afghanistan. Unfortunately, we must note that the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan is not ebbing. Moreover, in the northern regions of Afghanistan, major new underground heroin laboratories are being created with the support of international drug groups. All of this demonstrates the serious intentions of the narco-businessmen who have chosen to send their products through Central Asian countries.

We therefore firmly support the notion that the problem of drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan, in particular through the territory of Central Asian countries, must remain a priority item on the agenda of the international community and that the success of international efforts to enhance stability and security in Afghanistan will depend to a critical degree on the success of the war on drugs.

In this connection, I am pleased to emphasize the contribution of the Government of Afghanistan in combating the production and trafficking of narcotics. We welcome the establishment of the Counter-Narcotics Department of the Afghan National Security Council. In emphasizing the great significance of the measures undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan, we would draw particular attention to the critical importance of the international community's

assistance to the Afghan Administration and the newly created Afghan structures to combat narcotics.

As a positive step towards resolving the challenges of and countering the drug trade, I note the launching of a new project to provide urgent assistance to Uzbekistan in reopening operations at the Termez-Hayraton checkpoint on the Uzbek-Afghan border. As members of the Council know, Hayraton is a key point along the international arterial trade route linking Afghanistan to Central Asia. It is very actively used by criminal drug groups for the illicit transit of most drug supplies from Afghanistan.

In the past few years, the law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Uzbekistan have seized more than 50 tons of narcotic substances in transit, predominantly transported by car or train. In the other direction, into Afghanistan, they have seized 72 tons of the illicit precursor acetic anhydride. We are convinced that assistance in supplying the checkpoints along the 156-kilometre Uzbek-Afghan border with state-of-the art equipment will enhance the effectiveness of monitoring freight entering and leaving Afghanistan. This will be of benefit not only to the countries of Central Asia, but also to any State where there is an inflow of illicit drugs from that country.

In combating drugs, Uzbekistan has enjoyed positive cooperation from international organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Customs Organization and Interpol. I wish to express my deep gratitude for the work carried out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and its regional offices. Uzbekistan attaches great significance to programmes carried out by these and other organizations, such as the Organization of Central Asian Cooperation, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Unfortunately, however, we must note that the many programmes that have been implemented under the auspices of various international organizations and those measures that we can take to counter the drug threat in the Central Asian region are poorly coordinated and inadequately resourced, financially and logistically. We believe that we need, in the place of these patchwork programmes, one centralized, clear, strong, well-planned system of preventive and pre-emptive measures aimed at eliminating, first and foremost, the very sources of this terrible threat.

In that connection, I take this opportunity once again to raise the issue of establishing a Tashkent regional clearing house to combat transborder crime, one of the major priorities of which would be combating drugs. This initiative was first put forwarded by President Karimov of the Republic of Uzbekistan during Secretary-General Annan's visit to Uzbekistan in October 2002. We hope for the support of the United Nations and donor countries in implementing that initiative.

We are hopeful that today's meeting will promote invigoration of the fight against illegal drugs and consolidate the efforts of all countries in halting and eradicating this scourge. Narco-violence, one of the dangerous challenges to humankind, can be stopped only if we coordinate our efforts throughout the international community.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the Philippines. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): Sir, it is my pleasure to address this important meeting under your presidency. We are more than confident that the Council will have a productive month under your delegation's stewardship. We also wish to commend the delegation of Pakistan and Ambassador Munir Akram for its active and excellent presidency last month.

We welcome the Russian presidency's initiative to discuss the situation in Afghanistan in order to sustain the international community's continuing commitment to Afghanistan. My delegation also appreciates the briefings given earlier today by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa on the drug situation in Afghanistan.

Eighteen months after the historic meeting in Bonn, the international community continues to support the rebuilding of Afghanistan and its integration into the international community as a free and democratic country. In that span of time, we have witnessed significant strides in the implementation of the Bonn agenda, specifically, the convening of the Loya Jirga, the establishment of the Transitional Government under President Karzai, the creation of a

national currency and the establishment of the Afghan national army. As we speak today, consultations on a draft constitution and preparations for the convening of the Constitutional Loya Jirga in October this year to pave the way for the elections in June 2004 are under way.

My delegation notes that the Afghan reconstruction process is on course; this is a tribute to the efforts of the international community, particularly to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the major actors who are taking the lead in key areas, such as narcotics — the United Nations; police reform — Germany; establishment of the rule of law — Italy; strengthening of the Afghan national army — France and the United States; and security through the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) under the commands of the United Kingdom, Turkey and, now, Germany and the Netherlands. Japan's contribution to the reconstruction efforts is also noteworthy.

However, the task of rebuilding Afghanistan is far from complete. Establishing security and reconstructing the economy and infrastructure of a country devastated by war for more than two decades requires a sustained commitment, going beyond what has so far been in place, and going beyond compassionate rhetoric.

In recent months, the Afghan people have been manifesting their growing restlessness and a measure of disappointment over the seeming lack of progress in their country and in their daily lives. Peace dividends have not touched the lives of many Afghans. At the same time, the Taliban is now waging conflict in the southern part of the country, to the detriment of reconstruction projects. Poppy cultivation has increased. While we note the progress in the channelling of revenues to the central Government, warlords or regional chieftains continue to undermine the authority of the central Government, especially in the provinces. One effective means for addressing the problem of the warlords would be to strengthen disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) measures. We thus welcome Japan's efforts in that regard.

It is disquieting that poppy cultivation in Afghanistan was again on the rise last year despite the issuance of decrees banning such cultivation. It may be recalled that opium cultivation in Afghanistan declined by 91 per cent in 2001 compared to the previous year, which resulted in a corresponding drop in global poppy cultivation by about 30 per cent, according to the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention. However, figures now indicate that poppy cultivation in Afghanistan reached approximately 3,500 tons in 2002, leading to a fivefold to tenfold increase in income derived from opium and heroin trafficking.

Thus, while efforts to curtail poppy cultivation are important, it should also be emphasized that a root cause of the dependence on such cultivation is the lack of alternative productive employment opportunities for the Afghan people in general. In this regard, the reconstruction process plays a vital role. Unless its pace is accelerated and economic growth is sustained and widespread, there may be no viable alternative to continuing poppy cultivation.

On the issue of security, my delegation welcomes the decision of the North Atlantic Council to continue and enhance its support to ISAF beginning in August 2003. However, it is apparent that security outside Kabul needs to be urgently addressed. The Taliban's regaining strength in the south needs priority attention.

On funding for reconstruction, reported figures indicate that only half of the Tokyo pledges have been forthcoming. Efforts in meeting the goals and pledges of the Tokyo Conference must be accelerated. It should be underlined that reconstruction funds are additional to the funds provided by donors for humanitarian assistance. The funds needed for long-term reconstruction programmes and for the immediate needs of the Transitional Administration are reportedly behind target by at least 50 per cent.

President Karzai recently estimated that $15 billion to $20 billion will be needed for the reconstruction of Afghanistan for the next five years. While this might appear to be a huge amount in addition to other funding requirements for Afghanistan, particularly for humanitarian assistance, the international community, we believe, should view this requirement in the light of its trade-off for peace and security and a substantial eradication of the drug menace and related organized crime.

The international community has travelled a great distance in supporting Afghanistan. Its support must, however, be sustained and strengthened. The Afghan Government has drawn up its national drug strategy,

and we believe that every effort must be taken to implement this strategy effectively.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Chun (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, the Republic of Korea welcomes your initiative to hold today's open debate on Afghanistan. It is most timely for the Security Council to draw the renewed attention of the international community to the Afghan situation. I join previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Antonio Maria Costa for their extremely informative briefings this morning.

Afghanistan has come a long way since the launching of the Bonn Agreement a year and a half ago. The political timelines set out in the Agreement have so far been met. We note the encouraging progress being made in the political processes of transition towards a multi-ethnic, broad-based and fully representative Afghan Government, including the work of the Constitutional Commission in preparing a draft constitution and preparatory work for next year's general elections. We are also gratified to note that the Afghan Transitional Administration has consolidated government authority throughout the country.

We believe that these positive developments would not have been possible without the sustained commitment of the international community to the Afghan peace process. In this respect, my Government pays tribute to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), under the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the participating members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and other international agencies which are playing indispensable roles in building a peaceful and democratic Afghanistan.

Despite some encouraging developments, in particular on the institution-building front, a host of daunting challenges lie ahead on the path to building a durable peace in Afghanistan. The fragile security situation is the most serious one, as shown by the tragic terrorist incident perpetrated against German ISAF members earlier this month. My Government takes this opportunity to express its deepest condolences to the German Government and to the bereaved families.

The security situation will become more precarious and the viability of the peace process may be severely tested as we move closer to the national elections scheduled for next year. For it is generally in the run-up to elections that tensions and rivalries between competing ethnic groups and factions become more acute and come fully into play. The improvement of the security situation is also essential to, among other things, containing the centrifugal forces fuelled by rampant factionalism and tribalism, which threaten the sustainability of the peace process. In that regard, the international community's sustained support for security sector reform cannot be overemphasized.

Another related challenge that the Afghan peace process faces today is the problem of drugs, which is the focus of our debate. My Government shares the profound concern over the nature and magnitude of the drug problem in Afghanistan, which poses a serious threat to the Afghan peace process and which has even wider ramifications for the region.

The production and trafficking of drugs has long been a prime factor in fuelling and sustaining intra-Afghan conflicts. We believe that countering that illegal sector of the economy should be an integral part, and a top priority, of the international community's efforts in support of the Afghan peace process. In that respect, we appreciate the United Kingdom's lead in supporting the Afghan Government's counter-narcotics efforts, Germany's lead in police training, and the efforts of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to strengthen the Afghan Government's verification capacity. We share the view that the drug eradication campaign will be more effective when police enforcement is coupled with the availability of alternative sources of livelihoods for farmers.

We believe that tangible progress in economic reconstruction and rehabilitation is vital in making the peace process irreversible. The Afghan people will enjoy the real peace dividends to the fullest only when they see progress in reconstruction and economic development. The Republic of Korea is strongly committed to reconstruction in Afghanistan. We are proud of carrying out our assistance programmes for Afghanistan, in line with our commitment to extend up to $45 million through 2004 despite our difficult financial situation. We are also contributing to Afghan nation-building endeavours in the field of security by dispatching army medical and engineering units to Afghanistan and providing telecommunications

equipment to the Afghan national army. My Government will continue to do everything in our capacity to help the Afghan people realize a peaceful, prosperous and democratic future.

The sustained support of the international community is vital to the success of the Afghan peace process and to reconstruction. But it cannot be a substitute for the will and efforts of the Afghan people and their leaders to help themselves in rebuilding their country.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council stresses that security remains a serious challenge facing Afghanistan. In particular, the Council expresses its concern over the increased number of attacks against international and local humanitarian personnel, coalition forces, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Afghan Transitional Administration targets by Taliban and other rebel elements. In this regard, the Council condemns in the strongest terms the attack against the ISAF in Kabul on 7 June. The Council also expresses its concern over other security threats, including from illicit drug trafficking. The Council stresses the need to improve the security situation in the provinces and further to extend the authority of the Afghan Transitional Administration throughout the country. Against this backdrop, the Council underlines the importance of accelerating the comprehensive reform of Afghanistan's security sector, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants.

"The Security Council welcomes the establishment and deployment of international civilian-military provincial reconstruction teams (PRT) in the provinces and encourages States to support further efforts to assist with improving security in the regions.

"The Security Council believes that constructive and mutually supportive bilateral and regional relations between Afghanistan and all States, and in particular its neighbours, based on the principles of mutual respect and non-interference in each other's affairs, are important for stability in Afghanistan. The Council calls upon all States to respect the Kabul Declaration on Good-Neighbourly Relations (S/2002/1416) and to support the implementation of its provisions.

"The Security Council reaffirms the principles established in the Political Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session, inter alia, that action against the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility requiring an integrated and balanced approach in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

"The Security Council recognizes the links between illicit drug trafficking and terrorism, as well as other forms of crimes, and the challenges posed by these activities inside Afghanistan, as well as to the transit, neighbouring and other States affected by the trafficking of drugs from Afghanistan.

"The Security Council also expresses its concern at the increasing risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS associated with drug abuse in the region and beyond.

"The Security Council stresses that security will be enhanced by continued coordinated efforts to combat the production of illicit drugs in Afghanistan, as well as to interdict narco-trafficking beyond its borders. The Council recognizes that the effort to counter the problem of drugs originating in Afghanistan will only be effective when it is integrated into the wider context of reconstruction and development programmes in the country.

"The Security Council expresses its concern that, despite the efforts pursued, the volume of illegal opium production inside Afghanistan in year 2002 has returned to former high levels. The Council notes with concern the assessment contained in the Opium Rapid Assessment Survey of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

(UNODC) that opium poppy cultivation has been reported in several districts of Afghanistan for the first time. The Council stresses the need to promote the comprehensive international approach, carried out, inter alia, under the auspices of the United Nations and through other international fora, in support of the Afghan Transitional Administration's Drugs Strategy to eliminate the illicit cultivation of opium poppy. The Council also supports the fight against illicit trafficking of drugs and precursors within Afghanistan and in neighbouring States and countries along trafficking routes, including increased cooperation among them to strengthen anti-narcotic controls to curb the drug flow. Extensive efforts have also to be made to reduce the demand for drugs globally in order to contribute to the sustainability of the elimination of illicit cultivation in Afghanistan. The Council welcomes the comprehensive drug strategy for Afghanistan as set out in the Transitional Administration's Drugs Strategy and calls for help to be provided within the framework of that strategy. The Council also welcomes the 'Paris Pact' (S/2003/641) introduced at the International Conference on Drug Routes From Central Asia to Europe held in Paris on 21-22 May 2003, and thanks the Government of France for convening the Conference.

"The Security Council expresses support for the commitment by the Afghan Transitional Administration to eliminate drug production by the year 2013 and its efforts to implement the decrees prohibiting the cultivation, production and processing of the opium poppy, including illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse.

"The Security Council welcomes the significant contribution by UNODC, and notes that the work of this Office in Afghanistan is restrained by the lack of general stability and security in the opium-growing areas of that country, which the international community as a whole should endeavour to ensure. The Council further welcomes projects underway by individual States to counter the threat of drugs in Afghanistan. Most of those projects are long term, which is vital to eliminating drugs on a sustainable basis. The Council underscores the pressing need to achieve as soon as possible a significant and sustainable decrease in opium production in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council acknowledges the necessity of coordination through the lead nation on this and all issues in Afghanistan, and expresses, in this regard, its gratitude to the United Kingdom and Germany for their work on counter-narcotics and police issues, respectively.

"The Security Council recognizes the problems caused to neighbouring countries by the increase in Afghan opium production, as well as the efforts made by them and other countries to interdict illicit drugs.

"The Security Council stresses the need to promote the effective realization of anti-drug projects for Afghanistan. These efforts can be reinforced through promulgation of a comprehensive programme of action in the region and the States of transit and destination. The Council notes, in this regard, a major coordinating capacity available with UNODC and calls upon all those concerned to cooperate with UNODC in order to adopt harmonized measures in this area. The Council notes the call for all those concerned to adopt compatible and harmonized measures for law enforcement and counter-narcotics efforts through support for the implementation of the Afghan Transitional Administration's Drugs Strategy and the Paris Pact, supported by the G-8 Summit in Evian on 3 June 2003. The Council urges donor States to work within such a consultative process to maximize the effects of their bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes.

"The Security Council urges the international community, in collaboration with UNODC and in accordance with the Afghan Transitional Administration's Drugs Strategy, to provide assistance to the Afghan Transitional Administration that addresses, inter alia, certain key areas, including the development of alternative livelihoods and markets, improving national institutional capacities, enforcing prohibitions on illicit cultivation, manufacturing and trafficking of drugs, encouraging demand reduction and building up the effective use of intelligence, including aerospace monitoring.

"The Security Council urges the international community, in collaboration with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and UNODC, to encourage cooperation among affected countries, specifically in strengthening border controls, assisting the flow of information between and among appropriate security and law enforcement agencies, combating groups involved in illicit drug trafficking and related crimes, particularly money laundering, carrying out operational interdiction activities and controlled deliveries, encouraging demand reduction and coordinating information and intelligence to maximize the effectiveness of all measures taken inside Afghanistan and beyond its borders.

"The Security Council invites the Secretary-General to include in his next report to the Security Council and the General Assembly on the situation in Afghanistan a summary of proposals made during its 4774th meeting, held on 17 June 2003, and any commentary and response to those proposals by any Member State and to submit his relevant recommendations to the Security Council for its consideration.

"The Security Council decides to remain seized of the matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/7.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.4775

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4775th meeting

Wednesday, 18 June 2003, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Von Ungern-Sternberg
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

Security Council mission

Report of the Security Council mission to Central Africa from 7 to 16 June 2003

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-39946 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Report of the Security Council mission to Central Africa from 7 to 16 June 2003

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Booto (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Nyamulinda (Rwanda) and Mrs. Mulamula (United Republic of Tanzania) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them photo copies of the report of the Security Council mission to Central Africa. That report will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/2003/653 on Friday, 20 June 2003.

I give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa.

Mr. De La Sablière (*spoke in French*): The members of the Security Council mission to Central Africa have asked me to report to the Council on the mission. As the President has just said, we have prepared a report, which is currently being finalized and which is now before the Council. The report includes our analysis of the situation and the mission's recommendations. I would like to make a brief oral report about our mission today. Of course, I suggest that each member refer to the written report we have prepared.

The Security Council mission that visited Central Africa from 7 to 16 June 2003 set for itself the main objective of supporting the peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

A second transitional President has just taken office in Bujumbura. It is to be hoped that an all-inclusive agreement should soon take the form of a Government of national reconciliation in Kinshasa. Nevertheless, we must note the fact that active hostilities continue in both countries. Both countries are at a critical juncture in their history.

Along with the Heads of State of the countries most directly involved in the peace processes — namely, South Africa, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda — the Council's mission contacted the heads of rebel movements and conveyed very strong messages to them.

The mission visited Bunia a scant two weeks after the humanitarian crisis there led the Security Council to adopt resolution 1484 (2003).

Given their countries' contributions to the peace process, the members of the Council mission took pains to listen to the views of Heads of State in Pretoria, Luanda and Dar es Salaam with regard to the two situations at the heart of the mission.

In Kinshasa the mission asked President Kabila and other Congolese officials to speed up the establishment of a transitional Government. In that regard, we took note of the commitment expressed to us by the parties to resolve by the end of the month the issue of appointing political and military transitional staff. We reminded everyone in the strongest possible terms, and in particular the Rassemblement congolais

pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma), that the Council demanded the immediate cessation of hostilities.

A cycle of violence has ravaged Ituri for several months. Attacks in the Kivus have recently become more intense. The main victims are not combatants, who are often well armed, but rather the civilian population. We do not want the next victim to be the peace process itself if the political programme of the transition does not materialize.

That is why all the parties must ensure that the armed groups receive no further foreign assistance, which enables them to perpetuate the conflict. We spoke to the Presidents of Rwanda and Uganda — who assured us of their support for the Multinational Force deployed in Bunia — of the great importance of what they can contribute to the stabilization of the Great Lakes region by exerting a positive influence on the armed groups.

The Security Council mission also provided an opportunity to remind all the actors that there can be no impunity for the human rights violations that, unfortunately, almost always accompanied the fighting. The pillaging of natural resources, analysed by the Panel of Experts headed by Ambassador Kassem, has become one of the causes of the continuing hostilities in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and can no longer be tolerated.

In Bunia, the Council members were able to witness the remarkable cooperation between the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the Interim Emergency Multinational Force. Here, I must commend the dedication and courage of the Uruguayan contingent. The deployment of the Multinational Force, which is being carried out — despite particularly difficult logistical conditions — somewhat more rapidly than anticipated, has already begun to create favourable conditions for a return of security. Thus, the conditions will be right, when the Multinational Force departs on 1 September, for a more effective United Nations presence in Ituri.

It is very likely that the camps in Bunia housing people who were internally displaced by the recent violence will grow as the situation normalizes. The humanitarian needs that the international community will have to address will be considerable.

Bunia has been deeply traumatized by the massacres of which its inhabitants were victims. A great many of the militia members we saw along the side of the road were young children; the problem of child soldiers is well known to the Security Council. However, the dignity and determination of the representatives of the interim institutions of Ituri and the women's associations that we met in Bunia attest to the fact that peace and reconciliation are deeply desired by the population — an essential condition in the search for a political solution.

In Ituri, as in the rest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we told everyone that a settlement of the conflict must be political. MONUC, together with the authorities of the transition in Kinshasa, must work to that end. It is from that perspective that Council members should examine the recommendations submitted by the Secretary-General in his recent special report on MONUC (S/2003/566). It will be a matter of defining how MONUC's role in the peace process of the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be most effective, perhaps considering the possibility of giving it a more robust mandate, taking into account the departure of the Multinational Force from Bunia on 1 September.

In Bujumbura, the presidential transition that occurred on 30 April, in conformity with the provisions of the Arusha Agreement, has made the process irreversible. In the absence of a complete ceasefire, however, peace in the country remains fragile.

The Security Council mission encouraged the Burundians to take the final steps that, however difficult they may be after 10 years of civil war, will enable them to seal their reconciliation. We invited those engaged in the transition to continue to demonstrate their determination by accelerating reforms, particularly those in the security forces and in the justice system. We urged the belligerents to put an end to the hostilities. In particular, we let it be known in the clearest way possible to the rebel movements that did not sign the Arusha Agreement that the ceasefire commitments must be respected. We told them that, as Burundians, they must prove their sense of responsibility by joining the peace process, and we encouraged the Government, from that perspective, to provide room for them within the army and in the transitional institutions. We also emphasized to everyone that the grave human rights violations that the Burundians had endured could not remain unpunished.

The Council members were able to witness the work of the mission that the African Union deployed to Burundi. That peace operation — the first sent by the African Union — deserves the international community's support. In addition, the Council mission noted the need to provide adequate economic and budgetary assistance to the transitional Government.

This Security Council mission, which took place at a particularly delicate time in the two peace processes that are under way in Central Africa, enabled us to renew a direct dialogue with the actors. Mindful that our visit in the region would not fail to create strong expectations, we took care to remind our various interlocutors that it was, above all, on them that peace and reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi depended. The States of the region also have an important part to play in promoting a return to peace and security. In that regard, everyone recognized the need to restore confidence on both sides of the borders. It seems to me that, while remaining mindful of the possibility of holding an international conference on peace in the Great Lakes region, we could also consider the idea of a declaration of good-neighbourliness, which was met with interest on the part of the heads of State to whom we presented it.

In conclusion, on behalf of all the members of the mission, I should like to thank everyone who participated in its organization. That involved considerable work and enabled the mission to work under excellent conditions. Since I had the honour to lead the mission, I should like to say, on a more personal level, how pleased I was with the work that we did together.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ambassador De La Sablière for his statement.

On behalf of the Council, I should like to express gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Security Council mission, which was very ably led by Ambassador De La Sablière, for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibility on the Council's behalf.

The next speaker is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nyamulinda (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation and my Government, Sir, I should like to commend your Government, yourself and your delegation for the competence with which you are guiding the work of the Council this month. At the same time, I should like to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Munir Akram of Pakistan, and his delegation for the energy they brought to the work of the Council in May.

My delegation also wishes to thank you, Sir, for having organized this important meeting to consider the report of the Security Council mission to Central Africa. It is taking place at a very difficult moment for the Great Lakes region of Africa, and as the region of Ituri in particular is in thrall to the struggles of rival armed groups, sowing death, which we all deplore, and misery among the civilian population of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

My delegation also wishes to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government of Rwanda to commend Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière and the mission of Security Council ambassadors that he led to Central Africa for the effectiveness with which they performed an excellent job in that region. We hope that the recommendations of the Council, with all of its acknowledged experience and vision, will in future be a source of inspiration in the search for a solution to unresolved issues from the Lusaka and Pretoria Agreements, including the complete disarmament of the former Rwandan Army forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe militias, which continue to pose a real threat to the security of Rwanda.

Nevertheless, my delegation would draw the Council's attention to the following observations on developments in the political and military situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in general and in Ituri in particular.

In recent days, my Government has been subjected to various persistent accusations from certain elements of the press and from so-called civil society, represented by the Bishop of Butembo. These sources have described the presence of the Rwanda Defence Forces in the regions of Ituri and Kanyabayonga. The same sources also describe the dispatch of Rwandan army helicopters to support the forces of the Union des patriotes congolais and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD)-Goma. These allegations are false, bereft of all truth, totally baseless and the utter fabrication of those who, under the cover of civil society, wish to sully the image of Rwanda and to serve the interests of divisive groups defending ideological

causes based on ethnic hatred and the exclusion of Rwandophone Congolese or of Congolese who bear some physical resemblance to the Rwandese. The Government of Rwanda is involved neither from anear nor from afar with the events taking place in Ituri, as the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its patrons would have us believe. The question of Ituri is an internal political issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Thus, answers to the question must be sought primarily within that country. The Government of Rwanda has neither sent soldier to the Democratic Republic of the Congo since the total withdrawal of the Rwandan Defence Forces of 5 October 2002, nor offers military support to any rebel group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

When the Government of Rwanda decided in late 1996 to combat the regime of the late Field Marshal Mobutu and subsequently to send troops into the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998, its decision was in fact a solution of last resort, following its repeated disappointment at seeing the international community fail to answer its many appeals to respond to my country's security concerns.

The presence of the Rwandan army in the Democratic Republic of the Congo up until November 2002 certainly managed to contain the attacks of the ex-FAR and Interahamwe militias of sorry memory and to stop them from crossing the borders. That presence was beneficial to the populations of the border provinces of Gisenyi, Kibuye and Cyangugu, who were living under the threat of those forces, whose avowed objective was to recapture power in Kigali and complete the 1994 genocide. In such circumstances, the Government of Rwanda was committed to honouring its primary legitimate responsibility of protecting its population and territory and to avert the threat of renewed genocide.

At the request of the international community, and following the signing of the Pretoria Agreement on 30 July 2002 between the Governments of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Government of Rwanda withdrew all its forces. I would recall that the withdrawal operations began on 17 September and were complete by 5 October 2002. This total withdrawal was recognized in a statement issued by the Third Party Verification Mechanism, as contained in document S/2002/1206 of 28 October 2002.

Ever since the signing of the Pretoria Agreement and the ensuing withdrawal of the Rwanda Defence Forces, the Government of Rwanda has tirelessly extended its hand to the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to seek solutions that would be satisfactory to our countries and in the interests of all.

However, we must note that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has made no gesture on the ground towards re-establishing a climate of trust between our respective Governments. Indeed, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has maintained its support for the former Rwandan Army forces and the Interahamwe militias. In order to establish an alibi, that Government and its patrons quickly spread the rumour that the Rwanda Defence Forces had never fully withdrawn, thus justifying their attitude and the reoccupation of the territories of South and North Kivu, with the support of the Interahamwe, the ex-FAR, the Mai Mai rebels and Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération.

Given the prevailing political situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my delegation would ask the Council to pressure the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to behave like responsible politicians who honour their commitments towards their neighbours and the international community; to persuade the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to respect the Lusaka and Pretoria Agreements in all their provisions, in particular those relative to Rwanda's security concerns; to pressure the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to stop supplying weapons and ammunition to the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe militias; to remind the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that it must comply with the various resolutions of the Security Council calling on it to cut off all moral, political, logistic and financial support for the ex-FAR and the Interahamwe militias and to sunder its solidarity with the genocidaires; to persuade the Government not to shirk its governmental responsibilities and not to seek scapegoats to explain its inability to unite the Congolese and its political and military failures vis-à-vis the RCD-Goma; sufficiently to pressure the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to accept the establishment of a truly inclusive Government and a power-sharing arrangement in

accordance with the Sun City Agreement; to ask the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to pull its forces back from the eastern part of the country to the positions they held before the withdrawal of the foreign armies, in compliance with the various agreements; and to strengthen the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and provide it with a clear mandate so as to prepare it to step in once the Interim Emergency Multinational Force has completed its task.

With respect to political developments in Burundi, my Government commends the initiative of the African Union, which decided to send an African force to assist in restoring trust among the belligerents and to help Burundi implement the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration (DDRR) process. However, the Government of Rwanda continues to be concerned at the persistent refusal of the leaders of certain rebel factions of the Front pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD) and the Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu/Forces nationales pour la libération (PALIPEHUTU/FNL) to join the Arusha peace process. We earnestly ask the Security Council to put the necessary pressure on those groups to bring them to see reason and to respect the agreements and protocols signed in Arusha.

To conclude, my delegation, on behalf of my Government, would like to reiterate its keen gratitude to the mission of the Security Council and the Council as a whole for its resolve to find solutions to the complex questions that our region faces.

We hope that the Council, in its wisdom, combined with the resolve of the international community and the countries concerned by the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will arrive at a response to the various parties' concerns, taking into account the previously signed agreements of Lusaka, Pretoria and Sun City.

The Government of Rwanda remains committed to supporting the multinational force charged with restoring peace in Ituri. To that end, the Government of Rwanda will spare no effort in associating itself with all countries of the region that desire peace, and with the international community, in order to find peaceful solutions for the crises haunting Central Africa, in particular the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Booto (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation, for the effective way in which you are guiding the work of the Council for the current month, and we thank you for convening today's meeting. I would particularly like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who, since the outbreak of the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has been personally committed to the search for ways to restore peace in the country. My congratulations and thanks also go to the members of the Security Council, who, under the enlightened leadership of Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, the Permanent Representative of France, visited Central Africa from 7 to 16 June 2003 to carry out the mission that is the topic of the report just now presented by the Ambassador of France. I am convinced that the correct implementation of the report's recommendations will clear the way to peace and enable the Congolese parties to overcome the remaining obstacles in order fully to implement the all-inclusive agreement on the transition in the country, signed in Pretoria in December 2002.

Since the signing on 2 April 2003 in Sun City of the final document on the inter-Congolese political negotiations, my country has spared no effort to implement its share of obligations. It will be recalled that on 7 April 2003, the head of State, General Major Joseph Kabila promulgated the Constitution of the transition and took office as President of the Republic for the period of transition. After taking office, he promulgated a decree granting amnesty for all acts of war and offences of political expression and opinion. He also suspended the court of military orders.

We must also note the unwavering resolve of my Government to accelerate the movement towards transition through the recent appointment of the first President of the Supreme Court and the State Prosecutor of the Republic, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the global and all-inclusive agreement.

Finally, I would like to remind the Council that to make the establishment of the transitional institutions irreversible, since 14 April 2003 the President of the Republic has convened in Kinshasa the first meeting of

the Commission national de suivi tasked with preparing the establishment of the new institutions.

However, the dynamic of war, which has become permanently installed in the east, hinders the search for a political solution. In fact, the obstacles to the peace process continue. I think the Council was informed of that during its mission's visit to my country. It does not seem to us to be difficult to identify the authors behind those obstacles. The observable lack of progress on the problem of the structure of, and the distribution of appointments in, the integrated Congolese army are the result of the intransigence of certain elements, in particular the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma), whose endless demands risk jeopardizing the entire process. Once it had obtained the Ministry of Defence, RCD-Goma then wanted control of the army.

The mission of the Council will undoubtedly recall that during its passage through Kinshasa, RCD-Goma forces decided to launch a large-scale offensive in the east, taking control of the town of Kanyabayonga. That behaviour is not only a violation of the all-inclusive agreement; it also constitutes a brake on the establishment of the transitional institutions. We can only deplore the fact that the resumption of hostilities initiated by RCD-Goma has jeopardized the chances for success of the DDRR operations led by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). It is important for the Security Council to maintain pressure on the leaders of RCD-Goma and their supporters, in particular the Rwandese Government, so that the RCD-Goma will honour their commitments in accordance with the global and all-inclusive agreement and so that the Rwandan Government will desist from exercising its negative influence on the RCD-Goma and all other Congolese parties. No one is unaware of the negative role that Rwanda plays in that part of my country. No lie uttered by the representative of Rwanda could conceal the truth.

We hope that the interest generated by the visit of the Security Council mission will be maintained so that the trouble-makers can be prevented from derailing the process of the country's normalization, for the people of the Congo aspire to peace and reconciliation.

I would like to stress that the situation in the east of the country is a cause of ongoing concern and risks jeopardizing progress at the national level. The political process undertaken by the Ituri pacification commission has stagnated as a result of the renewed hostilities between the Hema and the Lendu in the city of Bunia. The explosive situation prevailing there led the Security Council to authorize the deployment until 1 September 2003 of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force. Resolution 1484 (2003), which gave that force a mandate, underlines the strictly limited and temporary mandate of the Force, while the situation in Bunia requires a successful long-term solution.

That is why my Government, echoing the request made to the Council by the inhabitants of Bunia and by the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a whole, calls for the invocation of Chapter VII in order to change and to extend MONUC's mandate in order to restore the peace and then maintain the peace.

In order to put an end to the cycle of violence in Ituri, in the Kivus and in the rest of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my Government would like to recall the need for a mechanism to address the issue of impunity, in keeping with paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 1468 (2003), adopted on 20 March 2003.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo fully supports the recommendations in the report of the Security Council mission and hopes that the Council will take a decision so that it is binding in its application.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now call on the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mrs. Mulamula (United Republic of Tanzania): Mr. President, Tanzania would like to join others in welcoming you and the members of the Council back from the important mission you undertook in the Great Lakes region, which included a visit to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I hope you had the time to enjoy the bright sunshine in Dar es Salaam, which contrasts with the wet weather in New York.

We also want to thank His Excellency Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, head of the Security Council mission team, for his leadership role and the oral briefing on the team's findings.

As they say, "seeing is believing". There is no doubt that the visit offered you an opportunity to assess the situation on the ground and to contemplate decisive

measures to help the fledgling and still fragile peace process, both in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi. We welcome the fact that the mission had an opportunity to meet all the key players, including the heads of State and the parties to the raging conflict in the region. We see a ray of hope on the horizon, given the commitment shown by the Council and, of course, the regional leaders, to see that impunity is not tolerated and that peace prevails in that war-torn region.

We find comfort in the fact that the Council, when determined to act, can act swiftly. We hope the momentum created in deploying an interim multinational force in Bunia will be followed by the deployment of a robust peacekeeping force. The position of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania was stated clearly by my President, His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, when he met the mission. Needless to say, for the record, while the countries in the region recognize their responsibility and that of the Congolese and Burundi people in bringing lasting peace to the region, their efforts alone, however determined, will not be sufficient to stay the course of peace. This is why our leaders expect their efforts to be complemented by decisive actions and the support of the international community in the true spirit of partnership for peace.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/566) offers a comprehensive roadmap, so to speak, towards peace-building in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly by reinforcing the presence of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and its mandate. There is not a single doubt, at least from all the statements made before the Council, that there cannot be a military solution to ending the violence and lawlessness in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere.

It is apparent from the Secretary-General's report that the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR) programme is crucial for the peace process to remain on course. The challenge to the Council, therefore, is not to let the momentum ebb, but to move expeditiously to empower the MONUC force to ensure viable and sustained peace and security in the volatile areas, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

The prospects for lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will largely depend on the degree to which this Council can stand up to the process. Any delay can only be detrimental to the peace process to which all parties have committed themselves. It is our hope that the political groundwork that has been laid will be sustained, both in Burundi and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We urge the Council to walk an extra mile along the path to peace and stability in the Great Lakes region.

In conclusion, let me reiterate what President Mkapa asked of the Council as the way forward. His first suggestion was to look into the possibility of a non-aggression pact or similar mechanism that could promote mutual trust and dispel suspicion. Secondly, the spirit of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should be advocated to encourage and support good governance and accountability in order to prevent some of the problems we face in the Great Lakes region from recurring. Thirdly, there is a need to promote, support and increase contacts among nations. Such contacts may include professional organizations and civil society, both of which could foster greater tolerance among Governments. Fourthly, better endowed countries could explore the possibility of helping to avoid wars by halting the proliferation of arms into potentially explosive parts of the world.

By addressing these four suggestions, we believe that the Council would be taking decisive action in addressing the root causes of the problems facing the region.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.4776

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4776th meeting

Thursday, 19 June 2003, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Akram
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. King
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country (S/2003/621)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

03-40108 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country (S/2003/621)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and with the consent of the Council, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation to the representative of Guinea-Bissau to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. dos Santos Jaló (Guinea-Bissau) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Gambia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. David Stephen, Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Stephen to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Dumisani Kumalo, Chairman of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Kumalo to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country (S/2003/621).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. David Stephen, Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, and Mr. Dumisani Kumalo, Chairman of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. David Stephen, Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Stephen: The report before the Council, contained in document S/2003/621, is the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS).

As members will recall, I briefed the Security Council on 5 March on developments in Guinea-Bissau since 13 December 2002, when the last report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/1367) was issued. Members of the Council will also recall that, following my last briefing, in March, the Council, in a statement to the

press, expressed concern at the political instability in the country and appealed to the Government to ensure that the forthcoming legislative elections are conducted in a transparent, fair and credible manner. The present report covers developments since that briefing, concentrating on the situation in the country in advance of legislative elections, due on 6 July 2003. It also describes the contributions of UNOGBIS, in collaboration with the United Nations country team on the ground, to promote conditions conducive to free and fair legislative elections.

Since my last briefing, in March, the overall situation in Guinea-Bissau has worsened. The opposition continues to accuse the Government of restrictions on civil liberties. Donors have conditioned financial support for the elections on the creation by the Government of conditions propitious for credible elections. The caretaker Government continues in office, while the National Assembly remains dissolved. Judicial institutions continue to be weak.

With regard to the electoral process, at President Kumba Yalá's request, the United Nations Development Programme has continued to provide technical assistance to the National Electoral Commission. UNOGBIS will be prepared to coordinate international observation should conditions on the ground be conducive to free and fair elections.

To reassess the electoral preparations on the ground, an electoral needs assessment mission of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs visited the country between 5 and 11 June. The mission noted that it is not technically feasible for the elections to be held on 6 July and urged the authorities to undertake the planned electoral census, or revision of the electoral registers, with a minimum of delay. While the President has concurred with the view that the polling date cannot be maintained, he has yet to announce publicly that the elections will be postponed and that a new calendar of electoral activities is under consideration. However, some progress has been made towards launching the voter registration.

While it is encouraging that the country remains peaceful, regrettably, the overall economic situation remains critical. The non-payment of months of salary arrears by the Government, amounting to something like $11 million, has raised the level of social frustration, resulting in periodic strikes by public sector workers. The Government has, however, told the trade unions that it intends to pay arrears of wages soon. Since the report was completed, there have been more cabinet changes. In other developments, *Radio Bombolom* continues to function. On 3 June, the former Minister of Defence, as well as President Yalá's Adviser for Political Affairs, who had been detained since April, were provisionally released.

To conclude, allow me to highlight three points made in the observations section of the report. Every effort should be made by the country's elected leaders to return the country to political and constitutional normality, so that the rehabilitation and peace-building agendas can be put back on track.

Secondly, to gain the confidence of the donor community, the Guinea-Bissau leaders have to take concrete measures to ensure the holding of credible legislative elections and to guarantee respect for civil rights and the liberties of citizens of Guinea-Bissau.

Thirdly, in this hour of extreme want, the people of Guinea-Bissau need the support of the international community. To that end, despite concerns about setbacks in peace consolidation and economic recovery in Guinea-Bissau, the United Nations mechanisms, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the United Nations country team on the ground, remain constructively engaged in the country in order to help alleviate the most urgent social needs of the population. Their ongoing efforts, as well as similar actions by Guinea-Bissau's other international partners, are welcome.

The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa of the Security Council, the recently created Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council, and the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau have continued to work closely to explore ways to assist Guinea-Bissau. The Security Council's forthcoming mission to Guinea-Bissau, with the participation of representatives of the Economic and Social Council, is a timely initiative. The Secretary-General hopes that this mission will further encourage a productive and constructive dialogue between the Guinea-Bissau Government and the international community.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman of the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for inviting me and the Resident Coordinator two days

ago to brief members of the Working Group, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group established by the Economic and Social Council and the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau in advance of the Security Council's mission to Guinea-Bissau.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I call on His Excellency Mr. Dumisani Kumalo, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau established by the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Kumalo: I thank the Security Council for inviting me to participate in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau established by the Economic and Social Council. I am also representing the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala, who could not be with us today. For us, it is important that the Security Council has again invited the Economic and Social Council to exchange views on the matter of peace and security in Guinea-Bissau. We greatly appreciate and thank the Council for this opportunity.

It is significant that there will again be a joint visit to Guinea-Bissau by members of the Security Council and members of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau established by the Economic and Social Council. That visit next week will convey a collective message that we wish to strengthen the confidence between the people of Guinea-Bissau and their international partners.

The Secretary-General has captured the situation in Guinea-Bissau probably in the most sobering words contained in paragraph 3 of his report (S/2003/621). He writes that "I regret to say that in the reporting period the overall situation in Guinea-Bissau has not improved. In fact, it has worsened".

Guinea-Bissau is a country that is still emerging from conflict. As we have already reported to the Economic and Social Council, Guinea-Bissau first emerged from conflict three years ago and even received post-conflict assistance from donors and the Bretton Woods institutions. In fact, Guinea-Bissau was among the countries that benefited from their inclusion in the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. As the Secretary-General confirms in his report, the economic, social and political situation in the country suggests that Guinea-Bissau may be sliding back towards chaos and even conflict.

At the present moment, Guinea-Bissau is a country that exists in a grey area, and that therefore presents the international community with a unique challenge. The instruments that the Security Council employs to maintain international peace and security do not apply to Guinea-Bissau. Neither does Guinea-Bissau qualify for the instruments that donors and the Bretton Woods institutions provide to countries that are in a post-conflict phase. Yet, in spite of that challenge, the Secretary-General reports that "the political will of the international community to provide support to Guinea-Bissau and its people is palpable" (*S/2003/621, para. 27*).

Guinea-Bissau is a country with a democratically elected head of State, President Koumba Yalá, with a full Cabinet of ministers assigned various portfolios. At this time, the one critical institution that Guinea-Bissau does not have is a parliament of elected representatives who can make decisions about the direction the country needs to follow in addressing political, economic and social matters.

For several months, Guinea-Bissau has awaited an election that has already been once postponed. There is general agreement that the situation in Guinea-Bissau may change for the better as soon as a parliament is back in place. The Secretary-General has reported that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has made available an initial grant of $500,000 to support electoral registers; and Portugal, which is among the Friends of Guinea-Bissau, has provided the necessary materials for holding an election.

What appear to be missing are conditions for holding free and fair parliamentary elections. However, the fact that a few years ago the people of Guinea-Bissau participated in a national election that was declared to be free and fair is an encouraging sign. We urge the international community to give the necessary support for a credible election to be held in Guinea-Bissau.

We note that the Secretary-General has reported that preparations for such an election have been slow, since "donors have conditioned financial support for the elections on the creation of propitious conditions for credible elections" (*ibid., para. 6*). As long as Guinea-Bissau does not have a parliament, questions of governance will remain, thereby discouraging donors from providing desperately needed assistance.

The humanitarian situation in Guinea-Bissau is worsening all the time. United Nations agencies continue to report that hundreds of children are dying from hunger and preventable diseases. There are reports of civil servants, including teachers and nurses, who have not been paid for many months. The World Food Programme (WFP) has been operating feeding schemes for more than 80,000 children since the beginning of this year. Recently, more than 2,000 metric tons of rice donated by Japan, another Friend of Guinea-Bissau, have been delivered to the country. We are encouraged that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have continued to send missions to Guinea-Bissau to help create systems under which this country can receive and manage international aid.

Despite all those signs indicating willingness by the international community to assist the people of Guinea-Bissau, the world expects more from the Government of Guinea-Bissau. As the Secretary-General states in his report, "The lack of progress in the constitutional and electoral spheres has been mirrored by the general deterioration in the political climate" (*ibid., para. 4*). To further quote the Secretary-General, "more is needed to restore confidence and trust within the country and between Guinea-Bissau and its international partners" (*ibid., para. 28*). We believe that the uncertainty of the political situation has an impact on efforts to address the humanitarian needs of the country.

The upcoming joint visit to Guinea-Bissau by members of the Security Council and members of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau will offer an opportunity to engage the authorities in finding a way out of this situation. The objectives we in the Economic and Social Council have set for ourselves will be to promote a dialogue with the authorities of Guinea-Bissau, to appeal to the Government to take measures to prepare for the forthcoming elections and to ensure that they are seen to be free and fair, to promote a better understanding between Guinea-Bissau authorities and the donor community, and to address the humanitarian situation in the country.

We believe that those objectives coincide very well with those that members of the Security Council have set for themselves. We look forward to a historic and successful visit to Guinea-Bissau.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mrs. dos Santos Jaló (Guinea-Bissau): The creation of a security advisory group on conflict prevention in countries emerging from conflict is yet another part of the United Nations battle for peace and security in the world. Today we are discussing one such country, Guinea-Bissau.

Let me express my deep appreciation for the attention that the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council have been paying to countries emerging from conflict, especially Guinea-Bissau. Today, we are discussing the report of the Representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau. As one can see from the report, Secretary-General Kofi Annan has discussed the political, economic and social situation in Guinea-Bissau, which remains of great concern.

It had been quite some time since the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group has visited the country with representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions. At that time, they went over the details of the problems in Guinea-Bissau by meeting with President Yalá, members of the Government, opposition figures, the media, civil society and people of all stripes. All these efforts were made to better understand the situation in the country and find better ways to address the economic crisis and calm social tensions.

Those efforts continued after the return of the delegation from Bissau. The group produced a report that puts forward very positive recommendations. The report states that both sides must work with each other in a spirit of partnership and compromise.

It has not yet been possible to implement such an approach, for reasons that will become clear during the visit to Guinea-Bissau. I shall arrive in the country two days before the delegations of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council. In saying this, I am continuing to appeal to the international community not to give up helping the people and Government of Guinea-Bissau to find a way out from the deep crisis in which we now find ourselves.

I would also like to make some comments about the positive parts of the report, including the military and security aspects. A positive sign is that the World

Bank is helping the Government find a way to pay some of the arrears to teachers and to feed some 80,000 children of Guinea-Bissau. Another positive part of the report concerns the United Nations Children's Fund programme to promote early childhood development and to feed children.

I am aware of the fact that the situation in Guinea-Bissau requires that we do more than simply maintain order at the border with Senegal. We must also bring calm to the cities and villages of Guinea-Bissau by improving the security of the people and breaking down all kinds of barriers that prevent the country from moving towards development and peace.

I will not end my statement without appealing yet again to the international community for its support. As I said before, it must not give up on Guinea-Bissau. I appeal to it to continue to help the country. Problems exist and must be resolved. How is this to be done? If we must wait until everything is in place before assistance is given to the country to hold elections, I believe the population will continue to suffer. This is not what either the United Nations or the international community as a whole would want.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the donors that continue to help the country, such as Italy, which has forgiven 100 per cent of debt, Japan, which has donated rice, and the other countries that in emergencies have provided money to calm the situation. I would like to voice my appreciation to all those in the international community who are fighting for improvements in the country.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker on my list is the representative of Gambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Grey-Johnson (Gambia): My delegation intervenes in our capacity as Chair of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau.

Let me at the outset commend you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to afford us yet another opportunity for reflection on the post-conflict phenomenon that the case of Guinea-Bissau has come to represent. This is a country that, to all intents and purposes, is still stuck in the transition to full democracy, even though some years back it was able to conduct multiparty elections that were deemed to have been free and fair. It is a country that is still in transition, because the structures and institutions that make for a functioning democracy, though provided for in law, are in reality extremely weak and unable to sustain the workings of a democratic system. The political culture that would allow for meaningful operation of a multiparty parliamentary system is still in the making and society finds itself at the rudimentary stages of maturation, making it difficult for the workings of a truly democratic system to take root.

It is to the Security Council's credit that it has come to realize that in the matter of the transition of soft States from conflict to democracy there are many grey areas and phases fraught with all sorts of difficulty, through which the country in question has to be assisted, nurtured and guided. Hence the effort to concert with the Economic and Social Council to work out appropriate courses of action through the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau to help the country come out of the woods. Having participated in the work of the Advisory Group since its inception, I have come to experience and share the frustration of its members at the difficulty of bringing our work to a meaningful conclusion and with positive results in support of Guinea-Bissau's democratic transition.

Although the temptation is to hastily place the blame for lack of progress at Guinea-Bissau's feet, we all know that in certain of our demands, we may be asking that the country shoulder certain responsibilities that are clearly beyond its strength to carry. Countries emerging from conflict are typically countries with severely reduced capacities — in governance, economic management, security and social protection. Guinea-Bissau falls perfectly into that category of countries. Yet, because the country was able to hold multi-party elections that were deemed to have been free and fair, the international system expects it to demonstrate similar strengths in other key areas in which it has still to build sufficient capacity. What is more, we penalize it for failing to perform to our expectations.

It is in that way that Guinea-Bissau has suffered under an unofficial regime of sanctions over the last two to three years. Development support has all but slowed to a halt in the context of a severe economic crisis. The social situation remains dire, particularly as it relates to the plight of the vulnerable — children, women and the poor, who make up the majority of the population. The performance of one indicator alone is

sufficient to illustrate the point. The United Nations Children's Fund has informed the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group that, out of a population of 1.2 million people, there were 1,000 deaths per month in Guinea-Bissau among children under five years of age. That is unacceptably high by any standard, but even more so under peacetime conditions. Why is the international community allowing this outrage to continue? Because it seems to want to punish a country it feels is not playing by the rules. But could it be that the country is not able to play by the rules? That is the question that must engage reflection on Guinea-Bissau. Hopefully, we shall eventually come to be of one mind on this issue and then begin the process of empowering a country in need, showing more of the carrot and less of the stick. When that happens, I hope that the appropriate response will be forthcoming in the form of emergency humanitarian assistance, development support, capacity-building programmes and so on.

I sincerely hope that the forthcoming Security Council mission to Guinea-Bissau will afford us all another opportunity to reconsider the parameters of, and reassess our approach to, peace-building and conflict management and countries with severely weakened capacities.

Let me seize this opportunity to commend the Representative of the Secretary-General and all the staff members of the United Nations in Guinea-Bissau for their commitment and dedication to service under very difficult conditions.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for scheduling this open meeting on Guinea-Bissau, thereby providing a clear demonstration of your commitment and that of the Council to the need to improve the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to thank Mr. David Stephen for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. We had an opportunity to benefit from his experience on the ground last Tuesday during the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, in which the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau and the Group of Friends also participated. All of them have contributed to this meeting this morning. I commend them for the good work they are doing for the people of Guinea-Bissau. I also wish to commend the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau for its role in promoting political dialogue in Guinea-Bissau and for preparing a countrywide programme of activities to consolidate the process of national reconciliation, which, in our view, is the key to any progress in the area of political stability.

I also welcome the opportunity given to us to address the issue of Guinea-Bissau more frequently. The current situation in that country requires our attention. It should continue to receive the international community's attention. The joint Economic and Social Council and Security Council mission that will visit Guinea-Bissau in a few days is a welcome and timely development.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/621) describes the situation in Guinea-Bissau as critical, and therefore in need of concrete and urgent steps by the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the international community. In that connection, while we look forward to visiting Guinea-Bissau, the critical message of the Council should focus not only on the need for commitment by the Government. In particular, the Council should ensure that the international community maintains its interest in helping the people of that country to address the fragile political situation and the persistent economic crisis.

With regard to the forthcoming legislative elections, we fully agree on the role to be played by the Government. At the same time, we should continue to call upon the donor community to provide the necessary financial assistance to enable the Government of Guinea-Bissau to fulfil its duties. I would like to thank the Governments that have met their commitments, thereby keeping hope alive for the people of Guinea-Bissau.

In order to address the situation in Guinea-Bissau we should always keep in mind the specificities of a country facing a complex of not only political, but primarily social and economic, problems due to various causes. The issue of the country's specific conditions has been understood by the Bretton Woods institutions, which have reclassified Guinea-Bissau as a low-income country under stress. The World Bank has also proposed that the authorities of Guinea-Bissau formulate an alternative staff-monitoring programme to provide a framework for donors by which to decide upon the effectiveness and continuation of their assistance in the current circumstances. Meanwhile, due to the urgent needs of the country, it is important to

demonstrate flexibility on both sides in order to facilitate the move from theory to practice, taking into account the fact that long-lasting economic solutions are also meaningful for achieving political stability in Guinea-Bissau.

It is clearly stated in the report of the Secretary-General that public dissatisfaction and frustration have resulted in periodic strikes by the public sector. That situation, and the consequent humanitarian crisis, can lead to a cycle of violence that will be more costly to address for the international community. To tackle the crisis, the work of the specialized agencies of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and other donors will be a determining factor that should continue to have our political support.

The number of countries emerging from conflict in Africa is increasing. Guinea-Bissau constitutes a test for the international community in managing a post-conflict situation and in cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. There is therefore a need to succeed in this case if we are to extend this experience to other post-conflict situations. In the search for a long-lasting solution in Guinea-Bissau, the involvement of regional players is an important tool in supplementing the work of the Security Council. We therefore welcome the involvement of such regional players.

As the report of the Secretary-General states, my country, in its capacity as the Chairman of the Organization of Portuguese-speaking African States, has spared no effort to lend its assistance to finding a way forward in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to commend the Economic Community of West African States for its efforts to find ways to resolve the crisis in that country.

The Security Council's forthcoming mission to Guinea-Bissau is the best opportunity both to deliver the Security Council's message and to hear from the people of Guinea-Bissau themselves. Most important will be the implementation of the recommendations to be made by the joint mission. It is therefore important that those recommendations focus on key issues. I look forward to visiting Guinea-Bissau for these reasons.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): My delegation would like to thank Mr. Stephen and Ambassador Kumalo for their reports. I must say that these reports paint a very bleak picture of the situation in Guinea-Bissau. The country stands on the brink of collapse. The economic situation is desolate. Good governance is absent. Freedom of the press and freedom of opinion are increasingly restricted and human rights violations further illustrate the dire situation of the country.

All efforts of the international community to engage the President and the Government of Guinea-Bissau in a constructive dialogue have so far yielded no results. The International Monetary Fund has withdrawn, World Bank projects will not continue to be financed as planned, and yet the donor community is fully prepared to assist Guinea-Bissau if Guinea-Bissau does its own part. This was again confirmed this week at the meeting of the Security Council Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa with the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau and representatives of the United Nations system.

We feel that, in this situation, three points are essential. The first problem that must be addressed is the need for a functioning elected National Assembly. Parliamentary elections must take place as soon as technically feasible. That such elections are feasible, I think, was proven by the fact that free and fair elections took place only a few years ago in that country. Yesterday, the European Union issued a declaration on Guinea-Bissau that lists the conditions which are indispensable for free, fair and democratic elections. Provided that these principles are adhered to, the European Union and Germany, as a member of the European Union, are willing to fund the electoral process. We will thereby be heeding the appeal made by Ambassador Kumalo.

Secondly, human rights must be respected. As a member of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, Germany is prepared to support sustainable solutions that will help Guinea-Bissau to overcome its crisis. However, solutions must be based on full respect for human rights and the principles of good governance. That brings me to my third and last point.

The separation between the executive, judicial and legislative powers in Guinea-Bissau must be restored and the budget must be handled responsibly and transparently. It is our hope that the Security Council's visit to the West African region will be able to impress on the authorities in Guinea-Bissau that adherence to these basic principles of good governance are a prerequisite for the return of Guinea-Bissau to

democracy and to sustained development that benefits its people.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I should like to express my appreciation for Mr. Stephen's report and commend him and his staff for their hard work in Guinea-Bissau, especially in the area of addressing human rights. I also thank Ambassador Kumalo for his report and the representatives of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau for their contributions, which were interesting elements to add to our discussion.

We are very concerned about the fragile human rights situation in Guinea-Bissau, as well as about the worsening social and economic situation that others have referred to. All of this is worsening political tension and contributing to potential instability. The United States believes that current conditions are not conducive to free, fair and credible elections on 6 July. We believe that the United Nations should consider making its assistance to those elections conditional on clear and irrevocable steps by the Government to ensure that the elections are free and fair. We would not want the United Nations to lend legitimacy to a fundamentally flawed election process.

We also call on the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take concrete steps regarding its rehabilitation and peace-building agendas, including commitments on the promulgation of the new constitution, the election of the President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court of Justice and the holding of fair and transparent legislative elections. These commitments should include guarantees that the opposition can participate in the legislative elections without harassment and with equal access to the media.

We also want to urge the Government of Guinea-Bissau to demonstrate a stronger commitment to democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, as well as to engage in a constructive dialogue with the international community on meaningful ways to improve its economic governance so as to restore donor confidence.

Four years ago, this Council, along with many other bodies of the United Nations system, served as an emergency room to address the armed conflict in Guinea-Bissau. Four years later, Guinea-Bissau is still in intensive care. It has shown signs that it may be returning to a point of crisis. The international community can and will help — we are confident of that — but the Government of Guinea-Bissau must itself take urgent steps to stop the downward course it is currently on.

The Security Council delegation, when it arrives in Guinea-Bissau next week, will press upon the Government the need to create basic conditions for democratic governance, peace and stability. Doing so will help, in the words of the Secretary-General in his report before us today,

> "to restore confidence and trust within the country and between Guinea-Bissau and its international partners". (*S/2003/621, para. 28*)

In conclusion, I want to express our appreciation to the French delegation for preparing a draft presidential statement, which we will approve in coming days and which the United States supports.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): This public meeting, which is being held on the eve of the joint mission of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to West Africa, is most timely. The mission will provide us with the opportunity to assess the unresolved problems confronting Guinea-Bissau so as to enable a direct, frank and constructive dialogue with players at all levels.

I wish to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General, the Head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau; the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council, the Ambassador of South Africa; and the Ambassador of Gambia, the Chairman of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, for their important statements this morning on the situation in that country.

As the most recent report of the Secretary-General indicates, the situation in Guinea-Bissau, ever worrisome, has further deteriorated since the holding of free and fair general elections. It indicates above all that major and varied problems confront the authorities in the pursuit of the democratic process.

In this regard, my delegation notes that, in spite of certain aspects that have been described, this gloomy picture is attributable first and foremost — let us not forget — to the legacy of a war of liberation and successive conflicts arising, inter alia, from difficulties linked to the slow implementation of the programme to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants. Moreover, the impact of a wrecked economy that

depends solely on revenue from mahogany must be taken into account. In other words, the international community has not massively intervened in Guinea-Bissau to consolidate the new-found peace and to assist in reconstruction by creating a viable programme to accompany the democratization process.

It is now recognized that these are complementary stages in a country in a post-conflict situation. Progress made at one stage has a bearing on the success of the following stage. We must bear that in mind in the case of Guinea-Bissau.

My delegation remains convinced of the urgent need for Guinea-Bissau to take courageous political measures and believes that those measures must be accompanied by the palpable improvement of the country's economic situation, through adequate financial assistance from the international community. The restructuring of its institutions depends upon it, and the holding of new free and legitimate elections justifies that reasonable request.

Therefore, my delegation would like, here and now, to renew its appeal to the donor community, in particular the Bretton Woods institutions, to show more flexibility in their understanding of how to solve the ongoing problems in Guinea-Bissau.

In our opinion, a realistic plan for recovery must be designed to assist Guinea-Bissau, based on planned and coordinated assistance and requiring equally realistic results.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. David Stephen, and the Permanent Representative of South Africa, Ambassador Kumalo, for their briefings.

I listened very closely to the statement made by the representative of Guinea-Bissau. The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Guinea-Bissau (S/2003/621) is very comprehensive and provides the Council with a wealth of timely information. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment of the situation in Guinea-Bissau as set forth in his report.

Guinea-Bissau, where the situation had seemed very promising as the country embarked on the path to rehabilitation, reconstruction and peace-building, following the end of the armed conflict of 1998 and 1999 and the holding of general elections, has recently witnessed mounting tension and finds itself at a critical juncture. We hope that all parties concerned in Guinea-Bissau will put the fundamental interests of the nation and the people above all other considerations and will take effective measures to ensure that Guinea-Bissau does not relapse into turmoil and strife. We also believe that the international community is duty-bound to pay greater attention to the question of Guinea-Bissau and to help its Government consolidate the hard-won achievements of peace of two years ago.

China commends the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau, the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, the Economic Community of West African States and the Organization of Portuguese-speaking African States for their efforts to promote stability and to consolidate peace in Guinea-Bissau. We earnestly hope that those bodies and organizations will continue to enhance their cooperation with one another. China also appeals to the members of the international community, particularly of the donor community, to fulfil and increase their pledges of assistance to Guinea-Bissau in a timely manner.

The Security Council will soon send a mission to Guinea-Bissau. We wish it success, and we believe that it will be a successful mission contributing to moving the situation in Guinea-Bissau towards stability.

The Chinese delegation supports the presidential statement prepared by the French delegation, whose work we appreciate.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the report of the Secretary-General on Guinea-Bissau (S/2003/621). Its introduction today was very timely, given the imminent departure of the Security Council's mission to Western Africa.

We regret the import of the report insofar as it relates the deterioration of the political and economic situation in the country. As early as the beginning of this year, the Security Council had been warned of several disturbing signs and of the need for the political leadership to take additional steps to prevent the country from slipping back into a dynamic of conflict. Such a situation would be highly regrettable, given the tragic examples of other countries of the region that have today sunken into civil war.

The additional necessary steps, as we know, are the final promulgation of the new constitution, the establishment of conditions for holding genuinely democratic elections and unconditional respect for human rights and civil liberties. Those steps have not yet taken place. That naturally concerns us, who ourselves suffered the costs of the violation of human rights in our country's now fortunately distant past. However, we have to recognize that the reopening and operation of *Radio Bombolom* constitutes a positive step.

Conspiring against the desired stability of the political situation is the grave economic and social situation in which thousands of citizens of Guinea-Bissau are struggling. Also serious is the State's inability to pay the salaries of civil servants. On past occasions, we have seen the result of the destructive combination of political instability, the grave deterioration of economic conditions and the erosion of State authority. The result is quite simply the outbreak of greater conflict, which would inevitably have disastrous consequences for the innocent civilian population.

On previous occasions, we have underlined the importance of attending to the social and economic needs of countries such as Guinea-Bissau in order to defuse conflicts before they occur; their resolution at a later stage is too costly in human terms. We reiterate our appeal to the donor community and the international financial institutions not to abandon Guinea-Bissau to its fate but to continue to explore creative formulas that would allow us to maintain our hope.

However, we insist that all the efforts of the international community will be useless without the firm resolve of, in particular, the Government, the political parties, civil organizations and all relevant national actors to commit themselves unreservedly to the cause of peace, development and well-being of their own people. On this occasion, we firmly reiterate the appeal to all parties to shoulder their responsibilities.

Finally, the case of Guinea-Bissau is of special importance because it could constitute a model of coordinated effort between the Security Council and other United Nations organs such as the Economic and Social Council to deal with the problems of countries in pre-conflict and post-conflict situations. As we have noted in various forums and debates on conflicts in Africa, such situations require a multidisciplinary approach. The strategy for social and economic recovery prepared by the Economic and Social Council with the agreement of the Government of Guinea-Bissau belongs to that approach. We express our hope that the Security Council mission will have a constructive and fruitful dialogue with President Yalá and that this will, in turn, lead to tangible progress preventing a deterioration that would be damaging to the country and, even more importantly, damaging to its people.

For all the aforementioned reasons, we support the presidential statement, coordinated by the delegation of France, on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Pujalte (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau, Mr. David Stephen, for introducing presenting the report on the political situation in that country (S/2003/621). Mexico regrets the fact that since 5 March 2003, the date of the most recent Security Council consultations on Guinea-Bissau, the situation in that country and the political, economic and human rights aspects of the situation have deteriorated. With respect to paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report, my delegation expresses its concern at the alleged harassment of the Government's political opponents by security officials.

Mexico reiterates its position that parliamentary elections must be carried out only when all the necessary conditions exist so that they can be inclusive, fair and transparent and can be supervised by both national and international electoral observers. In that context, Mexico supports the Secretary-General's decision to dispatch another electoral mission to Guinea-Bissau to review the situation in that country.

Mexico believes that, in order to consolidate the peace, the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau should strengthen its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for former combatants and should intensify its demining efforts.

We cannot overlook the fact that Guinea-Bissau itself must undertake measures to foster political stability, good governance, respect for human rights and sound financial and economic management. The promotion of the rule of law, the swiftest possible

promulgation of the constitution, and the election of the President and the Vice-President of the Supreme Court would help to restore confidence in the country and in its institutions, which would help to create the right conditions for the Bretton Woods institutions and the international community to respond positively by providing emergency financial support and technical assistance to Guinea-Bissau.

Mexico will spare no effort to ensure that the upcoming Security Council mission to Guinea-Bissau will help to find a peaceful and negotiated solution to the current crisis. Mexico believes that the Council mission is an invaluable opportunity to strengthen the political process in Guinea-Bissau and to define opportunities to promote economic and social development for its people.

In conclusion, my delegation appeals to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and to the Organization of Portuguese-speaking African States to renew their efforts to mediate among Guinea-Bissau's various political forces with a view to finding a peaceful and constructive settlement to the current political and socio-economic crisis. Mexico also urges that the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and ECOWAS work together in a coordinated way, to the greatest extent possible and in accordance with their mandates, in the quest for national harmony and to promote the sustainable development of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you on having convened this public meeting on Guinea-Bissau. This subject is very important at a time when the Security Council is actively preparing for the mission that it will send in a few days' time to West Africa, including to Guinea-Bissau, which will be the mission's first stop.

I should also like to thank our special guests for the high quality of their introductory briefings, which informed us of the difficulty of the challenges faced by Guinea-Bissau since the cessation of the armed conflict and of the risk of a reappearance of the conflict. In addition, I must thank the Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS), Mr. David Stephen, for his briefing, which, as usual, was particularly informative, detailed and precise. I should also like to tell him and the whole UNOGBIS team how much Cameroon appreciates the remarkable work that they do every day to help Guinea-Bissau to consolidate the peace and to restore itself socio-economically.

From the Secretary-General's report (S/2003/621), we see that the political and socio-economic situation in Guinea-Bissau has deteriorated further and remains a source of grave concern. The persistence of political tensions, the radicalization of the regime at this juncture and the deterioration of the human rights situation are factors of potential instability. Added to that is a particularly disastrous economic and social situation that gives Guinea-Bissau one of the lowest human development indices and makes an already tenuous social climate even more fragile. Thus, the situation in Guinea-Bissau is so anaemic that the country has accumulated enormous salary arrears amounting to approximately $11 million, and Ambassador Kumalo just referred to hundreds of children who are dying of hunger.

Clearly, the situation in Guinea-Bissau requires urgent and vigorous action by the international community. It also requires, first of all, the continued commitment of the citizens of Guinea-Bissau themselves, on whom rests the primary responsibility to resolve their problems. At the very least, the Security Council's efforts to make its contribution to the success of Guinea-Bissau's experience in the area of post-conflict rehabilitation in Africa must reflect a constant search for a balance between the need for the support of the international community and the political will of the country emerging from conflict. Those two rationales, which serve the same objective of post-conflict relief and reconstruction, need to go hand in hand. Undoubtedly, the political will of Guinea-Bissau and the resolve of the international community — particularly of the United Nations — cannot fail to provide substantial support, where it is needed, to the process of Guinea-Bissau's post-conflict restoration.

Cameroon therefore wishes to join the Secretary-General in acknowledging the commitment made several months ago by the Bretton Woods institutions to respond to the urgent needs of Guinea-Bissau's population. However, my country hopes and requests that that commitment be more specific, taking into account urgent current needs, particularly Guinea-

Bissau's lack of liquidity, whose sad result is the country's inability to pay its public servants, including teachers.

In our view, the World Bank must consider without delay the possibility of forgiving debt to restore and rebuild the economy in order to reduce social tensions, which would help to change the political climate. With the support of the United Nations Development Programme, the diligent finalization of poverty reduction strategies could also help to reconcile Guinea-Bissau's authorities with the international financial institutions and make additional resources available. Promoting a constructive dialogue among Guinea-Bissau, the international community and the Bretton Woods institutions requires that we seriously consider easing or lightening the short-term conditions imposed by donors on that country, which is not currently in a position to meet them and lacks the means to do so. Indeed, the Chairman of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau just asked us to consider that. He welcomed the fact that, in January, the Economic and Social Council approved the special report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, which suggests, among other recommendations, the establishment of a partnership between Guinea-Bissau and the donor community.

We also welcome the fact that the mandate of the Advisory Group has been extended to July 2003. Cameroon reiterates its full support for the recommendations in the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group, and we encourage interested parties to create conditions that will make this partnership a reality, in the interest of the people of Guinea-Bissau.

The upcoming legislative elections will no doubt be decisive in easing the political climate and will be an opportunity to demonstrate the democratic maturity of the people of Guinea-Bissau. In all circumstances, the political forces must give priority to dialogue and cooperation, taking this new opportunity to consolidate the peace process and to tackle resolutely the challenges of economic rehabilitation and reconstruction facing that country. We believe that the holding of free, transparent and regular elections will contribute to strengthening the credibility of Guinea-Bissau and to restoring the trust of its developmental partners. It would also promote the establishment of partnerships with them, particularly with the donor community.

The Guinea-Bissau authorities have committed themselves officially to organizing free and transparent elections. They need the international community. The international community must assist the country, as those authorities have asked, during the electoral process. In that context, we commend the initial subsidy from the United Nations Development Programme and the provision by Portugal of electoral logistical support. We also welcome the decision of the parliamentarians of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries to give financial and logistical support for the preparation and holding of the elections, as well as to provide observers. Cameroon encourages other potential partners to follow those examples with pragmatism.

We have also noted the conclusions of the evaluation mission referred to by Mr. Stephen earlier, and we are pleased to note UNDP's continued technical assistance to the National Electoral Commission.

I wish to express my country's full appreciation for the great creativity of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, and the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau in supporting that country in its reconstruction efforts. The success of the Guinea-Bissau experience will certainly enrich future recovery strategies for post-conflict economic reconstruction within the framework of an ad hoc advisory group created to that end by the Economic and Social Council. The future of Guinea-Bissau depends on that.

Finally, my delegation thanks the French delegation for having submitted a draft presidential statement, and it commends it for the manner in which it has conducted the negotiations on that draft. The measured tone and balanced language of the draft statement will create conditions for dialogue that are more favourable for the Security Council mission that will go, in a few days, to Guinea-Bissau. Cameroon concurs with it fully.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We wish to thank you, Mr. President, for holding this open meeting on Guinea-Bissau. It is a contribution to strengthening the efforts of that country and its Government for reform, reconstruction and rehabilitation and for building peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau.

We also wish to thank Mr. David Stephen for introducing the report of the Secretary-General. We appreciate the efforts of his Office and of his colleagues. We also thank Ambassador Kumalo and the Ambassador of Gambia for their important statements on the recent developments in Guinea-Bissau.

We believe that the coming period — during which preparations will be made for holding free and transparent elections and the internal situation, particularly the political and economic situation, will be dealt from a different perspective — will be a decisive phase for Guinea-Bissau, a country which needs the full support and encouragement of the international community and the donor community in order to save itself from its deteriorating economic situation, which is negatively reflected in various walks of life, particularly social and political ones.

We have taken note, and have listened to Mr. Stephen's statement, that officials' salaries, totalling $11 million, have not been paid. That has led to desperation. It is a clear example of the effect of the economic and financial situation on the internal situation in Guinea-Bissau. We also wish to refer, in that regard, to the death of children due to hunger, which has also been referred to by Ambassador Kumalo. In that context, we respect the efforts of the United Nations and of the Secretary-General, and the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Guinea-Bissau, as well as of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS). We thank them all for their great efforts in the difficult circumstances that that country is experiencing. We call upon the Government of Guinea-Bissau to further cooperate with the United Nations in order to support peace and stability there.

The Security Council has understood the importance of this phase that Guinea-Bissau is going through, and that is why it was included in the plan for the mission that will visit West Africa next week. That underscores the importance the Council attaches to that country, to restoring the peace desired. The visit will also be a real opportunity to assess the situation, to accurately inform the Security Council about it and to become familiar with sources of concern in Guinea-Bissau. The mission will give us the opportunity to help that country seek comprehensive and permanent solutions to the situation there.

In that regard, we wish to point out that the regional dimension of the resolution of all crises in African countries also applies to the crisis being faced by Guinea-Bissau. We appreciate the great efforts being made by neighbouring African countries, particularly West African countries and Portuguese-speaking countries. Their efforts greatly affect the search for a peaceful solution between the Government and the various sides and political parties in Guinea-Bissau.

We join the representative of Guinea-Bissau in addressing an appeal to donor countries and the international community at large to provide the necessary financial and humanitarian assistance to enhance stability in the country. We also call on donor countries, financial institutions such as the Bretton Woods institutions and the international community at large to cooperate with the Economic and Social Council to consider offering concessionary terms as a way of addressing the problems of Guinea-Bissau. We must work hard to find more efficient debt relief solutions given the very fragile economic situation, which negatively affects all aspects of life in the country and causes instability. We must take account of the political and economic history of Guinea-Bissau, as the representative of that country mentioned.

In conclusion, we would like to reaffirm the importance of the regional dimension, which is crucial to resolving the problems that Guinea-Bissau faces.

Mr. Duclos (France) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this public meeting. The fact that we have brought together here most of the players involved in Guinea-Bissau strikes me as particularly timely, given that it is clear that a comprehensive approach to the problems of the country is necessary to confront them.

I would like next to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. David Stephen, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General (S/2003/621) and for his very thorough briefing on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

Unfortunately, there is no reason to celebrate the facts that we have just been presented. The situation in Guinea-Bissau is indeed cause for concern. Since our consultations last March, it has hardly improved. This is true above all of the political situation, which remains unstable. The date for legislative elections has just been postponed once again. The voter registration

process, which is indispensable for fair and transparent elections, has not yet begun. The political climate is marked by extreme aggression and violence. Financing for the elections and for political parties is not guaranteed.

France wishes to express here its commitment to ensuring that the Guinea-Bissau authorities, particularly President Kumba Yalá, do what is necessary for elections to take place at the earliest possible date, and that they be free, fair and transparent — in a word, democratic. France also endorses the European position that no longer than three months after the end of the elections the President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court should finally be elected. The holding of elections followed by those Supreme Court elections would be concrete proof that the Government of Guinea-Bissau is embarking on a course towards the rule of law.

It goes without saying that the involvement of the international community will also be necessary to guarantee the smooth and democratic conduct of these elections and to stabilize the political situation. Donors must mobilize themselves to provide the necessary financing, and arrangements should be made for sending observers for the elections.

The human rights situation is hardly better. In this regard, the Secretary-General's report speaks of the persistent attacks on freedom of expression and arrests of opposition figures and protesters. France condemns such human rights violations in the strongest terms and appeals to the Government to shoulder its responsibility to put an end to that situation.

The same can be said of the country's economy, which is having trouble finding a way towards growth and development. The responsibility falls above all to the Government of Guinea-Bissau. The country's authorities must opt for a constructive dialogue and become full partners with the international community, as advocated by the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Working Group. They must make significant efforts in the area of good governance and make clear commitments to restore the trust of the international community, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions. It is only on this condition that the donor community can bring its full weight to bear on the reconstruction of the country.

I believe that the joint Security Council and Economic and Social Council mission that will be led by the representative of Mexico will show the Council's interest in resolving the many problems that the country must face today. The recent Council mission to Central African has shown the impact that such a mission can have when there is agreement by all on a limited number of strong messages to send to our negotiating partners and when the Council speaks with one voice.

I see that that is the case today. It is in this spirit that, at the expert level, we have prepared a draft presidential statement, which will be adopted shortly.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Russian presidency for holding this timely and very opportune public meeting on the eve of the Security Council mission to the West African subregion, which will have Guinea-Bissau as its destination. I would like to thank Ambassador Aguilar Zinser for agreeing to lead the mission to Guinea-Bissau.

I would also like to join other speakers in the pleasant duty of expressing our gratitude to Mr. David Stephens, the Representative of the Secretary-General, for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to thank Ambassador Kumalo, whom we are pleased to have with us again today for his comments as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council as well as Ambassador Johnson for his remarks as Chairman of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau. We have also heard some very pertinent comments here from the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau, on which the Council will need to reflect.

The importance of post-conflict peace-building and social and economic rehabilitation, reconstruction and development has been recognized as an essential requirement for durable peace and security. At the United Nations, Member States are trying evolve ways and means to respond to the requirements of countries like Guinea-Bissau. The coordinated efforts of the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in the case of Guinea-Bissau have opened the window for further strengthening and institutionalizing the United Nations response at the intergovernmental level to complex crises and situations that are characterized by interlinkages among the security, political, cultural, social, economic and developmental dimensions.

One way of developing a comprehensive approach to such complex crises would be to build on the existing cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. As my delegation suggested earlier, we could establish ad hoc composite committees, with membership drawn from the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such composite committees could generate a coherent and mutually supportive response to complex conflicts and crises that involve multifaceted challenges, such as those in Guinea-Bissau.

If Guinea-Bissau is to be prevented from relapsing into conflict, which is a real fear at this time, we must act quickly and judiciously. The response of the international community, spearheaded by the United Nations, to the peace-building and developmental needs of Guinea-Bissau should constitute a determined effort, based on principles but displaying operational flexibility.

Of course, the primary responsibility rests with the Government of Guinea-Bissau. It must take steps to address the multifarious challenges in all areas — including those in the political, social, economic, governance, human rights and other fields. The partnership approach recommended by the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau constitutes a well-considered strategy that we fully support. We hope that the Government of Guinea-Bissau will seize the opportunity that this partnership approach offers. We also hope that it will take the necessary steps to facilitate a constructive dialogue with the international community.

In our view, progress could be made if both the Government of Guinea-Bissau, on the one hand, and the international donor community, on the other — including the Bretton Woods institutions — were to place the interests of the common people — the citizens of Guinea-Bissau — above all other considerations. Social and economic issues need to be addressed simultaneously with political and security matters. Some way ought to be found to provide assistance to countries facing special circumstances, such as Guinea-Bissau, despite their structural and political problems. We must heed the advice coming from sensible quarters that it is timely for the international community to take the bold step to invest a little now in the peace-building effort in Guinea-Bissau rather than facing the prospect of spending much more in peacekeeping and enforcement in case — God forbid — that country were to relapse into conflict.

The joint mission of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to Guinea-Bissau later this month offers an opportunity to reassess our approach to the situation. The presidential statement to be adopted today contains a balanced message addressed simultaneously to the Government of Guinea-Bissau and to the international community. That message will provide the mission with a good basis to work to achieve common ground between the concerns of the Government and the donor community. In that way we hope that the Council will advance the twin agendas of peacekeeping and development in Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Raytchev (Bulgaria): First of all, I would like to join previous speakers in extending our thanks to you, Mr. President, for organizing this timely meeting of the Security Council. We welcome this opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. I would also like to thank the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. David Stephen, for his detailed briefing. We also welcome the participation and contributions of Ambassador Kumalo, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, and of the representative of Gambia on behalf of the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau.

Bulgaria fully associates itself with the statement of the Greek Presidency of the European Union adopted on 18 June 2003. I would like to make just a few comments in my national capacity.

My country, like others, is concerned about the political and institutional instability in Guinea-Bissau, as well as about the worsening economic and social problems in that country. The troubling information that continues to emerge about the human rights situation is of particular concern to us. We agree that every effort should be made by the national leadership of Guinea-Bissau to make sure that the peace-building process is put on the right track.

We concur with the Secretary-General's view that the forthcoming legislative elections are regarded as a crucial test of Guinea-Bissau's nascent democratic process. The importance of organizing timely, free and fair legislative elections cannot be overemphasized. Bulgaria fully supports the principles set out in the

European Union Statement on Guinea-Bissau for organizing transparent and democratic elections. We expect that the authorities of Guinea-Bissau will take the necessary action in order to ensure equal opportunities for all participants in the forthcoming elections. We welcome the readiness of the donor community to provide assistance for holding the elections if the Government of Guinea-Bissau adheres to internationally recognized legal procedures.

Bulgaria shares the view that respect for the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance are essential for the political and economic development of Guinea-Bissau. We express our concern with regard to the weakening of the rule of law and of the independence of the judiciary system, as well as with regard to infringements upon freedom of expression and access to information. In our view, concrete steps need to be taken at an early stage in order to address this situation. In that regard, we express the hope that the Constitution will be promulgated and that the President and Vice-Presidents of the Supreme Court will be elected as soon as possible.

We note with concern that the human rights situation in Guinea-Bissau has become more fragile. The report of the Secretary-General contains worrisome information regarding that issue. While we note that the reopening of the independent *Radio Bombolom* was a step in the right direction, we believe that there is much to be done in order to restore a climate of trust and national reconciliation in the country and to ensure that human rights and civil liberties are fully respected.

Bulgaria appreciates the involvement of the United Nations system in the efforts of the international community to address the peace-building needs of Guinea-Bissau. We are grateful for the contribution made by the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, which agreed last year on a set of useful recommendations on Guinea-Bissau. We also highly appreciate the work done within the framework of the Economic and Social Council to help the peace-building process in the country. It is our hope that the authorities of Guinea-Bissau will respond in a positive manner to the partnership approach defined by the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, I would like to express our appreciation for the role played by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, Mr. David Stephen, and the entire staff of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau in supporting the consolidation of democracy and promoting the rule of law and the protection of human rights. We also appreciate the draft text of the presidential statement prepared by the delegation of France, and are ready to support it.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting, which will facilitate a thorough debate of the situation in Guinea-Bissau at a particularly opportune moment, given that the Security Council mission to West Africa will visit that country in a week's time. We are certain that today's debate will enrich the content of our meetings in the field.

The latest report of the Secretary-General on Guinea-Bissau (S/2003/621) clearly states that the overall situation has worsened and that it is on a downward spiral. The political and institutional instability, the lack of a clear separation between executive, legislative and judicial powers and uncertainty with respect to elections are all cause for concern. With regard to the latter point, we attach particular importance to the holding of elections as soon as possible, so long as the necessary conditions are in place to guarantee that the elections are free and fair.

Moreover, the human rights situation and the worsening socio-economic situation are also priority issues to which the Guinea-Bissau authorities must devote their efforts, with the support of the international community.

In addition to the role being played by the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, we also welcome the efforts being made at the subregional level, in particular by the Organization of Portuguese-speaking African States and the Economic Community of West African States. We urge those organizations to pursue their activities in this area, since the strengthening of regional and subregional mechanisms is extremely important in the African context.

In conclusion, the statements we have heard in this meeting reflect the willingness of the international community to support the essential efforts that must be

made by Guinea-Bissau's leaders to ensure that the country will emerge from its current crisis.

Mr. King (United Kingdom): We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his report and to David Stephen and Ambassador Kumalo for their very helpful introductory remarks today.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau is very worrying. The political process appears to be stuck. We are disappointed at the lack of progress on the promulgation of the constitution, at the lack of continuity in the Administration caused by frequent ministerial changes, and at the increasing likelihood that legislative elections will again be postponed.

We are also concerned about the continuing tensions in the military. We hope that Guinea-Bissau's African partners are making it clear that unconstitutional methods of proceeding will not be tolerated. We are particularly alarmed by the deterioration in the human rights situation, including lack of press freedom and the undermining of the independence of the judiciary.

The primary responsibility for improving the situation lies with the President and the Government of Guinea-Bissau. We are making this clear in the proposed presidential statement and we agree with the points which previous speakers have made in this respect. The European Union's declaration on Guinea-Bissau complements these messages.

The Security Council mission to West Africa later this month will start in Guinea-Bissau. It is indeed timely, as David Stephen and a number of other speakers have noted, and we are pleased to be working with the Economic and Social Council again on this subject. We are also very grateful to Ambassador Aguilar Zinser for sharing the leadership of the West African mission.

The mission must send a tough message. The international community stands ready to help Guinea-Bissau in many areas, but needs the Government of Guinea-Bissau to show genuine commitment to free and fair elections and to sound financial management. This is what was agreed in the compact proposed by the Economic and Social Council mission last November. The Government of Guinea-Bissau must start seriously to deliver.

In conclusion, we commend all those who are working to improve the situation in Guinea-Bissau and, in particular, David Stephen and the staff of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

We are grateful to Mr. Stephen, Ambassador Kumalo, Ambassador Grey-Johnson and the representative of Guinea-Bissau for their participation in this meeting and their contributions to the discussion.

Like other Council members, we agree with the major conclusions of the Secretary-General's report. We note with concern the ongoing deterioration of the situation in Guinea-Bissau, as has already been noted in some detail, and agree that rectifying the situation and a genuine resumption of democratic processes in that country depend directly on the holding of free, fair and credible parliamentary elections. We believe that the Government of Guinea-Bissau is doing its utmost to ensure a prompt and full conclusion of the necessary pre-electoral work and the conduct of parliamentary elections on a democratic basis.

Given the exacerbation of social tensions in Guinea-Bissau, we also believe it important for the donor community to respond favourably to appeals by the country's Government for financial, logistical and technical support. Like other Council members, of course, we support and highly appreciate the efforts of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau and the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau.

The work of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau of the Economic and Social Council has created a new mechanism of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council with respect to countries engaged in post-conflict peace-building. We consider the Ad Hoc Advisory Group to be a useful instrument, allowing the Economic and Social Council, within its mandate, to become more actively involved in the practical issues of prevention and peace-building. We have already heard specific examples today of how useful it has been in Guinea-Bissau. We recognize the importance of this and similar groups in averting renewed conflict in the country and in serving as a focal point of international efforts to meet the critical challenges of a return to normalcy, of fulfilling the attendant urgent

needs of the population, and of developing a long-term programme to assist in the country's sustainable socio-economic development.

We believe it would be useful to establish a mechanism for two-way liaison between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, whereby political issues that arise in the course of peace-building are brought to the Security Council's attention in order to ensure subsequent political support for the post-conflict restoration of Guinea-Bissau.

Today's discussion confirms the importance of increasing interaction between the two Councils in the area of post-conflict peace-building and recovery. This is an area in which there is a pressing need for mutually complementary efforts between these major United Nations bodies.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, recalling its previous statements on Guinea-Bissau, including the statement of its President of 29 November 2000 (S/PRST/2000/37), having considered the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country (S/2003/621), and anticipating the Council mission to Guinea-Bissau, expresses its concern with regard to the fragile political situation in Guinea-Bissau, to the persistent economic and social crisis and to continuing disturbing information regarding the human rights situation. It urges the country's leaders and the international community to work more purposefully together to ensure that the development, humanitarian and peace-building agendas are quickly put back on track.

"The Security Council appeals to the President and Government of Guinea-Bissau to timely and effectively organize the forthcoming legislative elections and to ensure that these elections are conducted in a transparent, fair and credible manner, in accordance with the Constitution and the electoral law. It is the Council's expectation that candidates as well as political parties will not be subjected to violence and intimidation, and that the presence of international observers at these elections will be acceptable to all parties. The Council also expresses the hope that, following the successful conduct of the elections, the Government will embark on additional concrete measures to show further proof of its commitment to democracy and the rule of law by promulgating the new Constitution and by having the President and Vice-President of the Supreme Court duly elected without further delay.

"The Security Council calls on the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary steps to facilitate a constructive dialogue with the international community and the Bretton Woods institutions and to fully endorse the partnership approach defined by the Ad Hoc Advisory Group of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on Guinea-Bissau.

"The Security Council appeals to the donor community to contribute financially to the implementation of the political and economic process in Guinea-Bissau, including necessary support for the legislative elections.

"The Security Council expresses its concern with regard to the situation of human rights and civil liberties and urges the Government of Guinea-Bissau to take the necessary measures in order to improve this situation. It stresses the importance that freedom of speech and freedom of the press be fully respected.

"The Security Council acknowledges the importance of the regional dimension in the solution of the problems faced by Guinea-Bissau and, in that regard, calls on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOPS) to further strengthen their involvement and expresses its intention to intensify its cooperation with these organizations.

"The Security Council welcomes the willingness of President Kumba Yalá to host negotiations on the issue in Casamance and appeals to him to continue to cooperate constructively with the Government of Senegal in order to contribute to a solution of this issue.

"The Security Council recognizes and commends the important role played by the Representative of the Secretary-General as well as by the United Nations country team towards helping consolidate peace, democracy and the rule of law and expresses its appreciation for their activities.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the forthcoming mission to Guinea-Bissau, to be led by the Permanent Representative of Mexico and which will be the first part of an overall mission to West Africa, and looks forward to its conclusions and recommendations.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to keep the situation in Guinea-Bissau under regular review."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/8.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.